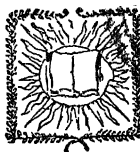


ABRAHAM LINCOLN

A HISTORY

BY JOHN G. NICOLAY
AND JOHN HAY

VOLUME FOUR



NEW YORK
THE CENTURY CO.
1904

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THE DEVINNE PRESS

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

CHAPTER I

FORT PICKENS REINFORCED

MILITARY and naval expeditions rarely move at their first appointed time. That prepared by Captain Fox for Sumter was, by the President's order, directed to sail on April 6, but did not actually start till the 9th; that prepared by Captain Meigs for Pickens was to have got off on the 2d, but only sailed on the 6th. The fitting out of both went on simultaneously at New York, but the officers concerned were not cognizant of each other's plans and measures. The sudden activity and work at the Brooklyn navy yard and at some of the public docks filled the newspapers with all sorts of surmises, but the secrets of the Government were not disclosed. "A powerful naval and military force sails to-day from this port," said "The Tribune," "to reinforce and protect the United States possessions in the South. The Collins steamships *Atlantic* and *Baltic* and the Vanderbilt steamer *Illinois* have been chartered, and in company with the frigate *Powhatan* will soon be on

CHAP I

1861.

CHAP I the high seas bearing ample supplies of men and provisions to the point most in danger. Whether that point be Pickens or Sumter we cannot at present say." This statement was perfectly sincere; the reporters obtained nothing except such evidence as it was impossible to conceal from the public.

Most of all, however, were the rebels mystified by these preparations. It has frequently been loosely charged that all the earlier orders and movements of the war were divulged by enemies and spies in the Washington departments. This is entirely erroneous. From the 2d to the 8th of 1861 April telegrams were passing daily from the rebel commissioners in Washington to the Montgomery authorities, but they contained absolutely nothing except the reports of these public observations, and the vague rumors and guesses afloat on the streets.

The Commissioners
to Toombs,
April 2, 1861
MS

Ibid.,
April 3, 1861
MS

Ibid.,
April 4, 1861
MS

Toombs to
the Commissioners,
April 4, 1861
MS

The Commissioners
to Toombs,
April 5, 1861
MS

Ibid.,
April 6, 1861
MS.

These dispatches show a curious fluctuation of rumors. Thus on the 2d the warning was, "Watch at all points." On the 3d: "Report says these movements have reference to the San Domingo question." On the 4th: "Strengthen the defenses at the mouth of the Mississippi"; to which Toombs responded, "We are ready." On the 5th: "An important move requiring a formidable military and naval force is certainly on foot. The statement that the armament is intended for St. Domingo may be a mere ruse" On the 6th: "The rumors that they are destined to use against Pickens, and perhaps Sumter, are getting every day stronger. We know nothing positive on the subject." On the 7th: "It may be Sumter and

the Mississippi; it is almost certain that it is Pickens and the Texas frontier." Even on the 8th they were as ignorant as at the beginning, and telegraphed to Toombs: "We believe Fort Pickens and Texas are the first points of military demonstration."

CHAP I

The Commissioners
to Toombs,
April 7, 1861
MS

Ibid,
April 8, 1861.
MS.

By this time the Governor of South Carolina was in a fever of anxiety, and had asked from Charleston, "We have so many extraordinary telegrams, I would be glad to know from you if it is true that they have determined to reenforce Sumter, and if a naval force is sent to our harbor. Be so good as to answer as soon as convenient, for something [is] desired to govern our conduct." Their reply to him is ludicrously oracular and inaccurate: "We are assured that you will not be disturbed without notice, and we think Sumter is to be evacuated and Pickens provisioned." The success of the Government in keeping its secrets is most conclusively shown in the fact that the first trustworthy news received by the Commissioners at Washington came to them from Charleston, in a dispatch signed by General Beauregard, who telegraphed, "Special messenger from Lincoln, Mr. Chew, informs us Sumter to be provisioned peaceably, otherwise forcibly."

Pickens to
the Commissioners,
April 7, 1861.
MS

The Commissioners
to Pickens,
April 8, 1861
MS

Beauregard to the
Commissioners,
April 8, 1861
MS

Four days and nights of incessant work at the Brooklyn navy yard, and at 2 o'clock on the 5th of April the war steamer *Powhatan* was ready for sea. The crew boarded their ship with cheers, the officers assembled in uniform on the quarter-deck, Commandant Andrew H. Foote, afterwards Rear-Admiral, formally turned over the vessel to her captain, the ensign was hoisted, and the *Powhatan*

CHAP I

Welles to
Mercer,
April 5, 1861
"Galaxy,"
Nov., 1870,
p. 627
Mercer to
Welles,
April 8, 1861
"Galaxy,"
Nov., 1870,
p. 633

Lincoln to
Porter,
April 1, 1861
"Galaxy,"
Nov., 1870,
p. 633

Lincoln to
Mercer,
April 2, 1861
"Galaxy,"
Nov., 1870,
p. 633

declared in commission for a special cruise. About the same time that afternoon the Secretary of the Navy at Washington was signing an order constituting the *Powhatan* the flag-ship and Captain Mercer the naval commander of the Sumter expedition, and giving him directions to convoy the provisions and troops to Charleston, and in case their landing was refused and opposed, then to open a way to the fort by force. This order reached Mercer on the next day, the 6th of April, and he was about to proceed in its execution, when Lieutenant Porter presented himself on board and showed him the order signed by President Lincoln directing that "Lieutenant D. D. Porter will take command of the steamer *Powhatan*, or any other U. S. steamer ready for sea which he may deem most fit for the service to which he has been assigned by confidential instructions of this date. All officers are commanded to afford him all such facilities as he may deem necessary for getting to sea as soon as possible." Another letter to Mercer, also signed by the President, explained to him that he was for a special purpose detached, but without any reflection on his efficiency or patriotism, and expressed the hope of giving him a better command. Here was an evident cross-purpose. Meigs was called into council, and the three officers discussed and criticized the conflicting orders. Meigs insisted that the President's signature was the higher authority; this both detached Mercer and placed Porter in command. Mercer was loth to depart from his ship, but at length correctly construed his duty and yielded, reporting to the Secretary of the Navy:

Your "confidential" instructions of the 5th instant were received on the next day, and I was on the eve of carrying them out, when Lieutenant D D Porter of the navy and Captain Meigs of the army came to me, showing such written instructions from the President, and verbally communicating other facts showing their authority from this high source, that Lieutenant Porter's being placed in command of the *Powhatan* was virtually necessary, and that the President's positive commands to both of these officers were that no deviation from his instructions should be made unless by his own direction. Under these circumstances I regarded the order from the President of the United States as imperative, and accordingly placed Lieutenant Porter in command of the *Powhatan*.

CHAP I.

Mercer to
Welles,
April 8, 1861
"Galaxy,"
Nov., 1870,
p. 633

That evening Porter steamed down the bay; but his successful departure was destined to run yet another hazard. Before the contest about the ship was concluded, he and Meigs had telegraphed to Washington. Mr. Seward, to whom their message was addressed, carried it to the Secretary of the Navy, but that official, in the absence of any knowledge, could not interfere, and they were therefore both compelled to go to the President. Mr. Welles says:

The President, who had not retired, although it was nearly midnight, was astonished and perplexed in regard to the statements which we made. He looked first at one and then at the other, read, and re-read the telegram, and asked if I was not in error in regard to the flag-ship. I assured him I was not, and reminded him that I had read to him my orders to Captain Mercer on the day they were written, and they had met his approval. He recollected that circumstance, but not the name of the officer or the vessel — said he had become confused with the names of *Pocahontas* and *Powhatan*. Commodore Stringham, to whom I had communicated the instructions, confirmed my statement, but, to satisfy the President beyond per-

CHAP I adventure, I went to the Department, although it was past midnight, and procured the press-copy. On reading it he distinctly recollected all the facts, and, turning promptly to Mr Seward, said the *Powhatan* must be restored to Mercer; that he had never supposed he was interfering with the Sumter expedition, that on no consideration should it be defeated or rendered abortive. Mr Seward thought it was now too late to correct the mistake; said he considered the other project the most important, and asked whether that would not be injured if the *Powhatan* was now withdrawn. The President would not discuss the subject but was peremptory, and said there was not the pressing necessity in the other case, which I learned was an enterprise for Pickens. As regarded Sumter, however, not a day was to be lost—that the orders of the Secretary of the Navy must be carried out, and he directed Mr Seward to telegraph to that effect to New York without a moment's delay. Mr Seward thought it might be difficult to get a telegram through, it was so late, but the President was imperative.

Welles in
"Galaxy,"
Nov., 1870,
pp 628, 629

Seward obeyed the President's direction and immediately sent the following to Porter: "Give up the *Powhatan* to Mercer.—Seward." When this dispatch was received at the Brooklyn navy yard the *Powhatan* was already some hours on her way. Nevertheless Foote hurried a swift tug in pursuit, which overtook the ship. But when Porter read the dispatch, and saw that it was only signed "Seward," he was not slow to avail himself of the same superior authority of the President over the Secretary of State that he had used over the Secretary of the Navy. He paid no attention to the telegram, but continued his voyage to Fort Pickens. Early next morning Captain Meigs, in the merchant steamer *Atlantic*, with supplies and a portion of the force of seven hundred men under

Ibid.,
pp 633, 634

Colonel Brown, sailed for the same destination; another ship, the *Illinois*, with the remainder following a day later.

CHAP I
Meigs,
Diary MS.

Lincoln's peremptory direction to Seward to detain the *Powhatan* if possible was based upon information received that afternoon. It will be remembered that Scott's order to land Vogdes's company at Fort Pickens was dispatched by sea on March 12, and that the non-receipt of any answer from it had caused the President great uneasiness. On this same afternoon of April 6 a special messenger reached the Navy Department, who, on being ushered into the Secretary's presence while yet dusty and travel-worn, unstrapped a belt from beneath his garments and took out an official dispatch from the fleet at Pensacola, which by journeying day and night he had brought over the Southern railroads from Florida to Washington. This dispatch brought serious news. Scott's order sent March 12 encountered such delays that it only reached the fleet April 1. Vogdes, in compliance, asked for immediate means to land; but Captain H. A. Adams, commanding the fleet, refused, alleging that it was a violation of the joint order of Holt and Toucey made in consequence of the Pickens and Sumter truce between Buchanan and certain Southern Senators on January 29. Scott's army order, Adams held, could not supersede Secretary Toucey's navy order; he therefore sent an officer to solicit the express commands of the Department, explaining in justification:

1861

Welles in
"Galaxy,"
Jan., 1871,
pp 96-98.

1861

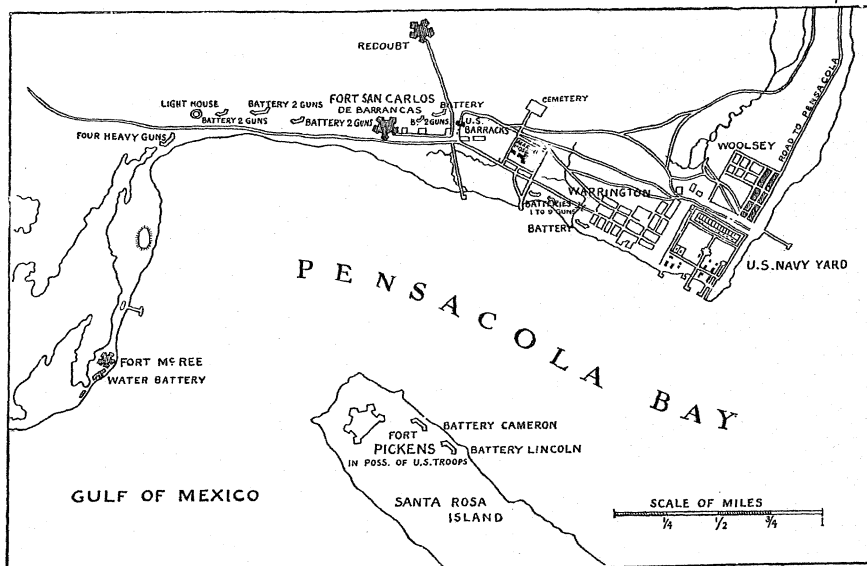
Such a step is too important to be taken without the clearest orders from proper authority. It would certainly be viewed as a hostile act, and would be resisted

CHAP I

to the utmost No one acquainted with the feelings of the military assembled under General Bragg can doubt that it would be considered not only a declaration but an act of war It would be a serious thing to bring on by any precipitation a collision which may be entirely against the wishes of the Administration At present both sides are faithfully observing the agreement entered into by the United States Government with Mr. Mallory and Colonel Chase. This agreement binds us not to reenforce Fort Pickens unless it shall be attacked or threatened It binds them not to attack it unless we should attempt to reenforce it I saw General Bragg on the 30th ultimo, who reassured me the conditions on their part should not be violated While I cannot take on myself, under such insufficient authority as General Scott's order, the fearful responsibility of an act which seems to render civil war inevitable, I am ready at all times to carry out whatever orders I may receive from the Honorable the Secretary of the Navy

Adams to
Welles,
April 1, 1861
"Galaxy,"
Jan., 1871,
p. 97

Deeply mortifying as was this action of Captain Adams in so urgent a contingency, there was such earnest sincerity in the tone of his letter, such conscientious technical obedience to his by this time antiquated instructions, such a manly offer to carry out any new orders of the Government coming through direct and regular channels, as to disarm all reproach. But mere chagrin was swallowed up in the sense of the new perils created by this condition of affairs so tardily revealed. Since Fort Pickens was still exposed to capture the Sumter expedition was doubly important. Meanwhile every nerve must be strained to get proper orders to Pensacola before Bragg should obtain information of it. As the result of a few hurried inquiries, a young naval officer, then comparatively unknown, but afterwards of brilliant renown, Lieutenant John L. Worden, was summoned before Secretary Welles.



NOTE : This map shows the Union and Confederate batteries as they existed May 27, 1861.

He was told to prepare for a difficult, perhaps dangerous journey, in the few hours to elapse before the next train started southward from the capital. Mr. Welles gave him a brief and unsealed written order which Worden committed to memory before reaching Richmond, and then destroyed the writing to insure absolute secrecy. He took the cars at Washington on the morning of April 7.

CHAP I

Welles in
"Galaxy,"
Jan, 1871,
p 99

Worden to
L P Walk-
er, April
16, 1861.
W R Vol
I, p 462

The notes of alarm from Washington and New York had put the Montgomery authorities on the alert. But their ignorance of where the threatened blow might fall confused and paralyzed their preparations to ward it off. Sumter was their first care, Pickens next. On April 3 the rebel Secretary of War inquired of Bragg whether he had made any progress in preparations to attack. Bragg's reply of the 5th said, "We are prepared for defense"; then added, "should the agreement not to reenforce be violated, may I attack?" Explanations were asked, and he thereupon stated his views more in detail. From these it appears that as an excuse to violate the agreement he had invented the pretext that an engineer officer had been placed in the fort. This he intended to construe as being a reenforcement. He himself felt the plea to be so weak as to need the concurrent sanction of the authorities. The weather had seemed about to furnish him the opportunity for attack, for he explained:

Cooper to
Bragg,
April 3, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 455

Bragg to
Walker,
April 5, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 455.

A strong easterly wind was blowing, calculated to drive off the United States naval vessels. It continues yet, but they hold on, though evidently with trouble. I am not prepared with my batteries for anything more than a feeble defense, . . . and that condition cannot be changed until I can get supplies. The only attack which I could hope to make now would be a sudden dash, distracting the

CHAP I

Bragg to
Walker,
April 6, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 457

enemy by a false attack, and scaling the walls in an opposite direction. The weakness of the garrison and the ardor and ignorance of my troops would be strong elements of success. In this movement I should not propose to fire a gun, unless in the diversion

Bragg to
Walker,
April 7, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 457.

But the elements did not render him the aid he had anticipated. The following day he was obliged to report by telegraph, "The blow is over and the vessels stood it out." Meantime the Montgomery authorities had received news of Lincoln's notice of the departure of the expedition, and of the sudden blight which had fallen upon the Washington mission; and there was something of a panic along the whole seaboard. Troops and munitions were hurried to Pensacola, and Bragg was admonished to be on the defensive. "Our commissioners at Washington have received a flat refusal," telegraphed Walker April 8; and again, in a later dispatch of the same date. "The expression, 'at all hazards,' in my dispatch of this morning was not intended to require you to land upon the island. The presumption is that reenforcements will be attempted at the dock, and this I hope you can and will prevent, though it should lead to assault of your works. The belief here is that they will not only attempt to reenforce the fort, but also to retake the navy yard."

Walker to
Bragg,
April 8, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 458.

To obtain Fort Pickens by arms and valor was for the moment despaired of, and instead, if we may credit the official dispatches, a subtler agency was called into requisition. Bragg had already reported, "Finally, I have reason to believe the garrison in Fort Pickens is greatly demoralized by influences which are operating strongly in our

favor." This was as much as he dared to trust on paper, and he sent a special messenger to Montgomery to obtain a corruption fund. Secession was ready to employ questionable expedients, and Walker telegraphed April 9, "Captain Boggs left here this morning to join you. Forty thousand dollars are at your disposal, to be used in the way he suggested to me as coming from you. Although he has no instructions on that point, as it escaped me in the hurry of his departure, you will however understand." But it usually happens that such a plan is more easily devised than executed. "Shall try to use the money," answered Bragg, "but great vigilance is exercised. They fear their own men." Upon whom these mercenary influences were to be tried does not appear, but the sequel proves that here, as in Texas, the Union soldiers were proof against bribery.

Lieutenant Worden meanwhile, traveling southward, arrived at Pensacola on the morning of April 11. He made known his presence as an officer of the United States navy, and applied to General Bragg for permission to communicate with the fleet, a right which the "agreement" of January 29 had distinctly reserved. "He wrote me a pass," says Worden, "authorizing me to go to the *Sabine*, and upon handing it to me he asked if I had dispatches for Captain Adams. I replied that I had not written ones, but that I had a verbal communication to make to him from the Navy Department. I then asked him if I would be permitted to land on my return towards Washington. He replied that I would, provided Captain Adams or myself did nothing in violation of the agreement

CHAP. I

Bragg to
Walker,
April 6, 1861
W. R. Vol
I, p. 457

Walker to
Bragg,
April 9, 1861
W. R. Vol
I, p. 459

Bragg to
Walker,
April 9, 1861
W. R. Vol
I, p. 459.

CHAP I
Worden to
Walker,
Apr 16, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 462

existing between them. I remarked that I knew nothing of the agreement he mentioned."

It must have been a most tantalizing delay to Worden pending these delicate and hazardous formalities; the day was rapidly wearing away. Four o'clock in the afternoon came before he was able to embark for the *Wyandotte*, lying in the harbor, and doing duty as a dispatch-boat for the fleet which lay anchored in the open roadstead outside. Still greater, however, was probably his impatience, when informed by the commander of that vessel that the strong wind and rough sea would prevent his crossing the bar that night. Even next morning the sea was yet too dangerous; it was already high noon when he crossed the bar and mounted to the deck of the *Sabine*. He at once communicated the order to Captain Adams; and that commander, anxious to send return news to Washington, and incautiously confiding in the terms of the agreement which reserved his "right and that of the other officers in command at Pensacola freely to communicate with the Government by special messenger," ordered him again to land at Pensacola, which he did at 5 P. M., to return by rail as he had come; a mistake in judgment which cost Worden seven months of imprisonment.

Welles, in
"Galaxy,"
Jan., 1871,
pp 100, 101

1861

As he had promised to do, Captain Adams promptly executed Secretary Welles's order to "land the troops on the first favorable opportunity." That same night, April 12, the boats of the squadron carried the artillery company of Captain Israel Vogdes, 86 men and a detachment of 115 marines, from the fleet to a convenient landing on the outside beach of Santa Rosa Island; the night

was dark and the rebels had early that evening extinguished the beacon, but the movement was effected without accident or delay, and before the enemy was even aware of it the peril of Fort Pickens was substantially warded off by this reenforcement to its garrison.

How narrowly this success was obtained the rebel correspondence demonstrates. Soon after Bragg had given Worden his pass he received the important intelligence, "Beauregard has been ordered to demand the immediate evacuation of Fort Sumter. If refused, his batteries will open fire." Yet more startling news was telegraphed him next day (April 12) from the rebel war department. "Lieutenant Worden of the United States navy has gone to Pensacola with dispatches. Intercept them." Another dispatch was also sent prompting him to attack Pickens. Bragg was forced to reply that the order came too late. "Mr. Worden had communicated with the fleet before your dispatch [was] received. Alarm guns have just fired at Fort Pickens. I fear the news is received, and it will be reenforced before morning. It cannot be prevented." The next morning (April 13) he was further compelled to confirm these apprehensions. "Reenforcements," he wrote, "thrown into Fort Pickens last night by small boats from the outside. The movement could not even be seen from our side, but was discovered by a small reconnoitering boat" It does not rebound to the credit of the rebel authorities that they vented their impotent rage at this result upon Lieutenant Worden. He was arrested at Montgomery, imprisoned, and only released by exchange seven months afterwards.

CHAP I

Adams to
Welles,
Apl 14, 1861
Report of
the Secretary of
the Navy, Dec
2, 1861

Walker to
Bragg,
Apl 11, 1861
MS

Walker to
Bragg,
Apl 12, 1861.
W R Vol.
I, p 459

Bragg to
Walker,
Apl 12, 1861.
W R Vol
I, p 459

Bragg to
Walker,
Apl 13, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 460

CHAP I

While these events were occurring the *Powhatan*, under Porter, and the transport *Atlantic*, under Meigs, together with her companion ship the *Illinois*, were separately making their way to the scene of action. The rebels were as yet entirely in the dark as to their objective point, though their departure from New York was evidently known. Some adventurous spirits at Mobile assumed that the *Illinois* was bound to the coast of Texas, and obtained authority from the rebel Secretary of War to arm a steamer at New Orleans as a privateer and undertake her capture. But as her voyage did not extend as far as the mouth of the Mississippi she was in no danger from the undertaking, even if it was carried out.

Walker to
Hotze,
April 11 and
12, 1861
MS

April, 1861

Meigs, in the *Atlantic*, reached Key West on the morning of the 13th, where he stopped to execute an important political mission with which he was charged. Key West, though situated upon an island only six miles long and two miles wide, was nevertheless the most important as well as most populous town of Florida; its two to three thousand inhabitants being then occupied in marine salvage, in commerce, in sponge fisheries, in salt production, in the various employments incidental to an active shipping industry, and the maintenance of a large Government naval station. It has a fine harbor, defended by Fort Taylor, a powerful work, which here to a great extent controls the commerce of this part of the world, as it guards the principal entrance to the Gulf of Mexico through the dangerous navigation of the Florida reefs. Garrisoned by only a feeble company in the earlier stages of secession, the foresight of General Scott had somewhat

strengthened the post in January; but the population of the town, naturally taking on the prevalent hue of Southern sentiment, was already seriously warped from its duty and allegiance to the Government. Here as elsewhere unionism was silenced and secessionism emboldened by the demoralizing Buchanan policy.¹ To correct this state of feeling and to avert these dangers, Meigs brought with him commissions for several newly appointed Federal officials, together with the President's authority to the military commandant to proclaim martial law, should that measure become necessary. Judge Marvin, of the United States District Court, and the new collector, navy agent, and marshal were called together at the fort, where Meigs explained to them, greatly to their relief and satisfaction, the policy and determination of the Government; and thus reassured in faith and strengthened in authority they promised to hold treason and revolution in check—a promise which they faithfully kept. It was high time for the Government to make its presence felt, for already a secession flag flew over the court-house, within musket-shot of Fort Taylor, and only the exercise of martial law, soon thereafter proclaimed, crushed the budding rebellion and maintained the Union authority at that important point.

Meigs
(Sept 14),
in "National
Intelligence"
of Sept 16,
1865

¹ An urgent report came to Washington that the United States Court at Key West had been paralyzed by the resignation of its clerk, marshal, and district attorney. Judge Marvin was thus left without power to enforce his authority, and was really apprehensive that a rebel force would come from the mainland to dislodge the Union offi-

cials. The rebel Congress, keenly alive to the importance of gaining a foothold here, had passed an act for the establishment of an admiralty court and popular rumor announced that an appointee of Jefferson Davis was on his way to put it in operation. The early action of the Government, however, rendered the scheme fruitless.

CHAP I

1861

This mission fulfilled, Meigs continued his voyage, and on the 17th came in sight of the fleet anchored off Fort Pickens. Prompt communication was had with Captain Adams, and before midnight two hundred men were landed from the *Atlantic* and added to the garrison. While this work was being continued the next morning (April 18th) the *Powhatan* hove in sight, disguised as much as possible, wearing English colors and burning English coal. Colonel Harvey Brown, who had taken command of the fort, hereupon sent word to Meigs, that in the present condition of affairs the original plan agreed upon at Washington had better be abandoned; that in "the unprepared state of Fort Pickens it would be disastrous to bring on a collision; that the running of the gauntlet by Porter would do this inevitably." Meigs fully concurred in this opinion; and being at the moment on board the *Wyandotte*, vigorously made signals to convey this understanding to the new-comer. But the *Powhatan* in her rôle of an English steamer paid no attention whatever to these American signals, and headed her course with unabated speed for the entrance of the harbor. Meigs knew both the ship and the headstrong temper of her commander. Porter, he felt sure, had made up his mind to run the batteries, and unaware of the changed and improved condition of the fort, would not be turned aside from this purpose by any ordinary notice. Quickly taking his measures, therefore, he ordered the *Wyandotte* to advance and lay exactly across the course of the *Powhatan*, and thus brought the impulsive Porter to a dead halt lest he should run down a Union

ship, and that only when the two vessels were within speaking distance, where Meigs could verbally explain the reason for the apparently reckless proceeding. CHAP I

Two more days passed, and Meigs and his brother officers began to grow uneasy about the *Illinois*, when she too made her appearance in safety. With the reenforcements brought by the Meigs expedition, Fort Pickens now contained some eleven hundred men, soldiers and laborers, nearly reaching the estimated war garrison the work was capable of holding, together with six months' supplies. The safety of the fort was fully assured, the fleet yet remaining to aid in its defense; and though beleaguered for a time the flag of the Union floated over its ramparts during the whole of the civil war. Meigs,
Diary MS.

CHAPTER II

THE SUMTER EXPEDITION

CHAP II

1861

WE have mentioned that almost simultaneously with Lincoln's inauguration, the rebel government at Montgomery adopted two measures for obtaining possession of Sumter. The first was when they sent the rebel commissioners to Washington, February 27, to negotiate for the fort; the second when, March 3, they sent Beauregard to Charleston to complete the batteries and take it by bombardment.

While pursuing the former of these measures, they had not for an instant neglected or intermitted the latter. Since February 6, therefore, actual war had existed at Charleston; Anderson from the fort, and the United States Government from without, had the undoubted right and rested under the constitutional duty to demolish the menacing works, to revenge the firing on the flag, and to vindicate its obstructed authority. That it did not do this resulted partly from the weakness of the garrison, but more from political considerations. All the while the rebellion pursued the offensive as far as military advantage would justify. The Governor of South Carolina proposed, February 13, to assault the fort, and repeated his

suggestion February 27. To this Jefferson Davis replied through his Secretary of War, March 1, that thorough preparations must first be made. It was to make such preparation that Beauregard was sent to Charleston and urged to his utmost diligence. "Give but little credit to the rumors of an amicable adjustment," wrote the rebel secretary. "Do not slacken for a moment your energies, and be ready to execute any order this department may forward."

While Beauregard was thus from without envioning Sumter with formidable preparations for attack, with a host of negro laborers and practically unlimited materials, Foster, the engineer officer of the fort, was, within its walls, busy in devising and constructing preparations for defense. He had retained some thirty or forty workmen, and though his materials were limited, he made the best use of those at hand. Had the resources been more equal, this might have lived in military records as one of the most exciting contests of engineering skill, and science and ingenuity might have changed a chapter of history. From the time of the occupation of Sumter, Anderson and his garrison were really in a state of siege, and under an irksome espionage and duress in their communication with the outer world; nevertheless they yet received their mails and were allowed to make certain purchases of fresh provisions in the Charleston market. There was a running fire of correspondence, interviews, protests, and explanations between the opposing parties calculated to produce friction and irritation; but, on the whole, the temper on both sides

CHAP II

Walker
to Pickens,
Mar 1, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 259.

Walker
to Beaure-
gard, Mar
15, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 276.

CHAP II was held well in check, and a commendable practice of external courtesies observed almost to the last.

But this show of civility was entirely subordinated to the military question. Anderson's mere personal sympathies were probably with the Southern people, but never with the Southern rebellion; his soldierly loyalty to his flag and government was as steady and as bright as a vestal flame. In some discussion he had said "that if attacked, and I found that I could not hold possession of the fort, I would blow it up, sacrificing our lives in preference to permitting ourselves to fall into their hands." Whether this language, or the fact that Foster had actually planted some mines at the landing wharf at Sumter to repel an assault, had come to the knowledge of the rebel authorities, they began to grow apprehensive that their coveted prize might not pass intact into their hands. "Dispatches just received from Washington," wrote Walker to Beauregard, "of the highest authority, speak of mines in Fort Sumter, and a purpose to destroy it and the garrison rather than be taken. Foster, the engineer, might be a good guarantee if kept in the fort." A few days later the idea was amplified by official instructions. In case the fort were abandoned, Beauregard was informed he must not give Anderson safe conduct unless "perfectly assured that there are no mines laid with trains within the fort," and if he declined to give such assurances, Beauregard was to "keep him where he is." This was while rumors of evacuation were coming thick and fast from Washington. The visits of Fox and Lamon to Anderson

Anderson
to Thomas,
Mar 27, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 221

Walker
to Beauregard,
Mar 15, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 276

Walker
to Beauregard,
Mar 21, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 279

strengthened these impressions at Charleston, and immediately thereafter Beauregard undertook to bring the point to Anderson's notice

Assuming that Lamon had communicated to Governor Pickens an intimation that the garrison would be withdrawn, Beauregard wrote to say that no formal surrender would be required, but that "whenever you will be prepared to leave the fort, if you will inform Governor Pickens or myself of your intentions relative thereto, we will be happy to see that you are provided with proper means of transportation out of this harbor for yourself and command, including baggage, private and company property. All that will be required of you, on account of the public rumors that have reached us, will be your word of honor, as an officer and a gentleman, that the fort, all public property therein, its armament, etc., shall remain in their present condition, without any arrangements or preparation for their destruction or injury after you shall have left the fort."

Anderson flared up under the humiliating proposal. "I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this date," he replied, "and hasten to say that I needed no denial from you of the expression attributed to you. The moment I heard that you had said that I should not leave this fort without surrendering, I remarked that it was not true, and that I knew you had not said so. I am much obliged to his Excellency the Governor and yourself for the assurances you give me, but you must pardon me for saying that I feel deeply hurt at the intimation in your letter about the conditions which will be exacted of me, and I must

Beaure-
gard to An-
derson,
Mar 26, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 222

CHAP II

Anderson
to Beauregard, Mar
26, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 222
Beauregard to An-
derson,
Mar 26, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 223

Anderson
to Beauregard, Mar
27, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 223

Beauregard to
Walker,
Mar 27, 1861
W R Vol
I, pp 282,
283

state most distinctly, that if I can only be permitted to leave on the pledge you mention, I shall never, so help me God, leave this fort alive" Beauregard saw that he had blundered and at once returned an apologetic note, saying he had only mentioned the rumors on account of their "high source," and expressing regrets at having referred to the subject. Anderson gracefully acknowledged the *amende*, adding, "I only regret that rumors from any source made you for one moment have the slightest doubt as to the straight path of honor and duty in which I trust, by the blessing of God, ever to be found." Beauregard made the best of his failure by reporting to Montgomery that Anderson had refused to give the required pledge, but that he considered his answer equivalent to one; where the matter was also dropped.

Although thus manfully maintaining his attitude of loyalty and duty, it is clear that Anderson finally fell into the belief and hope that he and his command would be withdrawn, and the feeling came near leading him into a serious error, aided by an accidental inadvertence of a subordinate, and more especially by the fact that the Government had not as yet sent him any definite instructions for his temporary guidance. This was probably a mere oversight; Lincoln supposed he had provided for the case in his order to General Scott of March 9 to hold all military places. It does not appear that General Scott repeated this order to post-commanders; and hence Anderson's latest instructions were those from Holt, dated February 23, in which a former declaration was repeated that "the attitude of that garrison, as has often been declared,

is neither menacing, nor defiant, nor unfriendly. It is acting under orders to act strictly on the defensive."

CHAP II

Anderson had means of knowing that this direction signified the abandonment of the Ward expedition. Since that time, therefore, he and his officers had apparently given up the hope that Sumter was to be permanently held, though they wished to retire with honor. It was upon this idea that they furnished the new Administration their very extravagant estimates for relief. Foster's letters expressed pleasure at the reported labors of the Peace Convention, and asked instructions based upon the assumption of a withdrawal of the forces. When Fox visited the fort, Anderson, as we have seen, manifested very decided disapproval at the plan of succor which that officer did not communicate, but, in Anderson's words, "merely hinted at." Lamon's visit a few days later was more welcome; for though he brought neither positive instruction nor information, he inquired about the condition of the garrison, and the best or most feasible methods of removal, and whether the rebels would permit them to depart if that painful measure should be found unavoidable; but nothing was promised, nothing concluded. "If Lamon was authorized to arrange matters, Anderson ought now to say so," wrote the Governor to Beauregard. "It will be seen by Major Anderson's answer, if there be any truth in man, that nothing like a doubtful course can be feared from him on the evacuation of Fort Sumter, which ought now to be decided upon in a few days," wrote Beauregard to the rebel secretary.

Anderson naturally fell into the current belief;

Foster to
Totten,
Mar 2, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 189

Ibid,
Mar 20, 1861
W R Vol
I, pp 209,
210

Anderson
to Thomas,
Mar 22, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 211

Ibid,
April 8, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 294.

Pickens
to Beaure-
gard, Mar
26, 1861
W R Vol
I, pp 281,
282

Beaure-
gard to
Walker,
Mar 27, 1861
W R Vol.
I, p 283

CHAP II

Anderson
to Thomas,
Mar 31, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 228

Anderson
to Thomas,
April 1, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 230

but day by day passed, and still the orders did not come. Meantime events were hastening to a crisis. Foster's forty-odd workmen were both a help and an encumbrance; while they built defenses they also consumed supplies, and could now no longer be kept. "As our provisions are very nearly exhausted," wrote Anderson, at the end of March, "I have requested Captain Foster to discharge his laborers, retaining only enough for a boat's crew. I hope to get them off to-morrow. The last barrel of flour was issued day before yesterday." "The South Carolina Secretary of War has not sent the authority asked for yesterday to enable me to send off the discharged laborers. Having been in daily expectation, since the return of Colonel Lamon to Washington, of receiving orders to vacate this post, I have kept these men here as long as I could. . . I told Mr. Fox that if I placed the command on short allowance I could make the provisions last until after the 10th of this month; but as I have received no instructions from the Department that it was desirable I should do so, it has not been done. If the Governor permits me to send off the laborers we will have rations enough to last us about one week longer."

Two days after this letter was written another exciting incident occurred in Charleston harbor. A schooner from Boston, with a cargo of ice for Savannah, having lost her reckoning in the fog, and supposing she had reached her destination, by mistake undertook to come into the harbor, without a pilot. When abreast the Morris Island battery, shots were fired by the rebels across her bows, whereupon her captain ran up the United

CHAP II

States flag. This started a cannonade from all the batteries in reach, and the master, now divining that he was in hostile quarters, hauled down his flag, put his ship about, and, running without serious damage out of gun-shot, came to anchor. Anderson once more felt his indignation rising and prepared to open the guns of Sumter in reply, but, as in the case of the *Star of the West*, the firing ceased before he was ready. Reporting the circumstances to Washington, and referring to the old orders which put him in a defensive attitude, he said: "I deeply regret that I did not feel myself at liberty to resent the insult thus offered to the flag of my beloved country." And in a later communication: "The truth is, that the sooner we are out of this harbor the better. Our flag runs an hourly risk of being insulted, and my hands are tied by my orders, and if that was not the case, I have not the power to protect it. God grant that neither I nor any other officer of our army may be again placed in a position of such mortification and humiliation."

Anderson
to Thomas,
April 4, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 237

Anderson
to Thomas,
April 6, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 245.

He started an inquiry into the affair, which brought him a practical apology from the rebel authorities for this incident, but it also brought him an unwelcome and harsh piece of misinformation. Lieutenant G. W. Snyder, whom he had sent to Charleston on this errand, made him a written report that "The Governor said that orders had been received from Montgomery not to allow any man in the ranks or any laborers to leave Fort Sumter, and not to allow Major Anderson to obtain supplies in Charleston; that Mr. Crawford, a commissioner from the Confederate States, now in

CHAP II

Snyder to
Anderson,
April 4, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 242

Washington, had sent a dispatch to him, stating that he was authorized to say that no attempt would be made to reenforce Fort Sumter with men or provisions, but that Mr. Lincoln would not order Major Anderson to withdraw from Fort Sumter, and would leave him to act for himself." This rendering of Crawford's dispatch was a material variance from the original, dated April 1, which ran as follows:

W R Vol
I, pp 283,
284

I am authorized to say that this Government will not undertake to supply Sumter without notice to you [Governor Pickens] My opinion is that the President has not the courage to execute the order agreed upon in Cabinet for the evacuation of the fort, but that he intends to shift the responsibility upon Major Anderson, by suffering him to be starved out

By whose design or act the perversion of language occurred cannot now be determined; but Anderson's comment seems based upon the error.

I have the honor to report everything still and quiet, and to send herewith the report of Lieutenant Snyder, whom I sent yesterday with a short note and verbal message to the Governor of South Carolina. No reply has been received to my note. I cannot but think that Mr Crawford has misunderstood what he has heard in Washington, as I cannot think that the Government would abandon, without instructions and without advice, a command which has tried to do all its duty to our country. I cannot but think that if the Government decides to do nothing which can be construed into a recognition of the fact of the dissolution of the Union, that it will, at all events, say to me that I must do the best I can, and not compel me to do an act which will leave my motives and actions liable to misconception. I am sure that I shall not be left without instructions, even though they may be confidential. After thirty-odd years of service I do not wish it to be said that I have treasonably abandoned

a post and turned over to unauthorized persons public property intrusted to my charge I am entitled to this act of justice at the hands of my Government, and I feel confident that I shall not be disappointed. What to do with the public property and where to take my command, are questions to which answers will, I hope, be at once returned Unless we receive supplies I shall be compelled to stay here without food, or to abandon this post very early next week "

CHAP II

Anderson
to Thomas,
April 1, 1861
W R V. L.
I, p 241

Commissioner Crawford's opinion was simply an untruthful guess. Two days before its transmission, as we have already seen, President Lincoln, who never harbored the remotest thought of sacrificing Anderson, had ordered the Fox expedition to be prepared to succor him, and on the day before Anderson wrote his letter was with his own hand drafting the precise instruction so earnestly solicited. The following is the entire order copied from the original:

WASHINGTON, April 4, 1861

SIR: Your letter of the 1st instant occasions some anxiety to the President

On the information of Captain Fox he had supposed you could hold out till the 15th inst. without any great inconvenience; and had prepared an expedition to relieve you before that period

Hoping still that you will be able to sustain yourself till the 11th or 12th inst, the expedition will go forward; and, finding your flag flying, will attempt to provision you, and, in case the effort is resisted, will endeavor also to reenforce you.

You will therefore hold out, if possible, till the arrival of the expedition.

It is not, however, the intention of the President to subject your command to any danger or hardship beyond what, in your judgment, would be usual in military life; and he has entire confidence that you will act as becomes a patriot and a soldier, under all circumstances.

CHAP II
Lincoln
Autograph
MS

Whenever, if at all, in your judgment, to save yourself and command, a capitulation becomes a necessity, you are authorized to make it

Anderson
to Thomas,
April 8, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 294

This manuscript draft, in its tone so considerate and humane, in its foresight and moderation so eminently characteristic of its author, was sent to the War Department, where it was copied in quadruplicate, addressed to Major Robert Anderson, signed by Simon Cameron, Secretary of War, and one copy immediately transmitted by mail to Fort Sumter, while other copies were dispatched by other methods. That same afternoon the Secretary of War and General Scott gave to Captain Fox, who, having completed his preliminary arrangements, had come to Washington for the purpose, his final and confidential orders for the command, the destination, the supplies, and the reenforcements of the expedition. In a conversation that afternoon Fox reminded Lincoln that but nine days would remain in which to reach Charleston from New York, a distance of 637 miles, and that with this diminished time his chances were greatly reduced. But the President, who had calculated all the probabilities of failure, and who with more comprehensive statesmanship was looking through and beyond the Sumter expedition to the now inevitable rebel attack and the response of an awakened and united North, calmly assured him that he should best fulfill his duty by making the attempt. Captain Fox returned to New York April 5, also bearing with him the orders of the Secretary of the Navy for the necessary coöperation of the war vessels. On the evening of April 8, the merchant steamer *Baltic*, bearing two hun-

Fox, Report, Feb
24, 1865

1861.

dred recruits, the required supplies, and Captain Fox, dropped down the bay and went to sea early next morning, with the belief and understanding that the war ships *Powhatan*, *Pawnee*, *Pocahontas*, and *Harriet Lane*, and the steam-tugs *Uncle Ben*, *Yankee*, and *Freeborn* would meet the *Baltic* at the appointed rendezvous ten miles off Charleston bar due east of the light-house on the morning of April 11, to provision Fort Sumter if permitted, or if resisted to attempt its reenforcement.

CHAP II

1861.

Commissioner Crawford, when he sent his dispatch of April 1 expressing the opinion that Anderson would be suffered "to be starved out," had added the insidious suggestion, "would it not be well to aid in this by cutting off all supplies?" Beauregard, who first received the dispatch, in his turn telegraphed it to the rebel secretary at Montgomery with the laconic addition: "Batteries here ready to open Wednesday or Thursday. What instructions?" The instructions came back promptly under date of April 2; Beauregard was told that he must keep himself in the state of amplest preparation; that the withdrawal of the commissioners from Washington might occur at any moment; that Anderson's supplies must be absolutely stopped; and that, "in general terms the status which you must at once reestablish and rigidly enforce is that of hostile forces in the presence of each other, and who may at any moment be in actual conflict." Beauregard, acknowledging this order, asked further instructions concerning Anderson's mails; they had been allowed to go daily, should they be continued or limited to once or twice a week? The reply shows how tenaciously the rebels clung

Beauregard to Walker, April 1, 1861
W R Vol I, p 284.

Walker to Beauregard, April 2, 1861
W R Vol I, p 285

Beauregard to Walker, April 4, 1861.
W R Vol. I, p 286

CHAP II to the idea of "peaceable secession," and that the fort would be finally given up.

Acting then on the leading ideas that the military isolation of Fort Sumter and the prevention of all possible espionage by the Washington Government are absolutely required, you are directed, while allowing Major Anderson to receive his mails, to exercise such instructive discretion as will secure the ends in view. Minute instructions covering every possible case cannot of course be given you, but you are directed to exclude possibility of the admission of any one who may be sent by or be favorable to the Government at Washington, always excepting such messenger or bearer of dispatches from that Government as you may be fully assured shall be conveying orders for the surrender or evacuation of the fortress.

Walker
to Beauregard, April
6, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 288

Next day, April 7, Beauregard gave Anderson notice that, in compliance with orders, no further communication with Charleston for purposes of supply would be permitted, and that "the mails, however, will continue to be transmitted as heretofore, until further instructions"; but he said not one word about the "instructive discretion," which we will see was soon exercised at least with his help and sanction, in violation of this broad and unqualified statement to a former brother officer whom he was still on the same day addressing as "Dear Major," and assuring that "nothing shall be wanting on my part to preserve the friendly relations and impressions which have existed between us for so many years."

Beauregard to Anderson,
April 7, 1861
W R Vol
I, p. 247

The increased espionage upon Anderson was not without its special motive. The rebel authorities were gradually realizing that Commissioner Crawford's prediction was a delusion. Their hopes

of a delivery of Sumter and a peaceable adjustment were fading out. Since that prediction was made warning telegrams and letters, some of which were quoted in a previous chapter, had been coming with ominous persistence from various quarters. Two of these attracted their serious attention. One was from a regular correspondent at Washington who mentioned the various rumors with evident prudence and good judgment, and summed up a decided preponderance of indications of a war policy. "A Virginia submissionist," wrote he, "came up here the other day to get some pacific assurances from Lincoln and Seward. He told a gentleman afterwards that their answers were vague and unsatisfactory. . . I am satisfied that Lincoln's own feelings and theories of duty all run on the side of coercion. It appears to me the Administration is concentrating its resources for a blow. In writing to you before I put the case less strongly than my convictions, because others here with opportunities to form a judgment thought differently; but every development—everything that can be construed into a development of official intentions—confirms what I wrote." This was from an active secessionist. The other was an anonymous dispatch in these words: "Positively determined not to withdraw Anderson. Supplies go immediately, supported by a naval force under Stringham, if their landing is resisted.—*A Friend*." Judge Magrath of Charleston, to whom it was first sent, immediately transmitted it to Montgomery with the comment: "Governor and General Beauregard visiting the posts in the harbor, and will not be here for a few

L Q Wash-
ington to
Walker,
April 4, 1861
W R Vol
I, Series
IV, p 46

W R Vol
I, p 287

CHAP II

Magrath
to Walker,
April 6, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 287

hours. In their absence I telegraphed to Washington to know who was the person signing himself 'A Friend.' The reply satisfies me that the person is high in the confidence of the Government at Washington." Whether the rebel authorities actually learned the name of the informant at the time is doubtful. It turned out to be James E. Harvey, shortly before appointed Minister to Portugal¹

The only practical result of Harvey's anonymous telegram was to increase the espionage over Anderson. Jefferson Davis dreaded the trial of war, and had faith in the success of intrigue. On the very day, and evidently after the Harvey dispatch came to hand, he wrote: "With equal confidence in our power to meet the political danger of peace and the physical danger of war, I await the determination of a problem which it belongs to the Government of the United States to control."

'Davis to
Campbell,
April 6, 1861
MS

¹ Much scandal and criticism of Seward was created by the development when it came, a few months later, and Harvey's recall was urgently demanded by a Senate Committee, and in connection therewith Seward gave the following explanation of the affair. Harvey was a favorite of certain "Old Whig" newspapers, and Seward to be magnanimous had secured his appointment, though Harvey opposed his nomination at Chicago. Being a correspondent, and believed to be trusty, the secret was imprudently imparted to him. Harvey was a South Carolinian, a classmate and an intimate friend of Magrath, and being also of the "compromising and conciliating" class of politicians, he had

Seward,
Conversation,
J G N, Personal
Memoranda. MS

constantly hoped for a peaceable arrangement, and had, upon the hearsay information long current in Washington, assured his friend that Sumter would be given up. Believing his personal honor thus involved, he hastened to send the correct information as soon as he gained it. The affair was a gross error of judgment, and a breach of confidence, but not an act of treachery. Seward obtained knowledge of the telegram the same afternoon it was sent, and in his first indignation advised the President to revoke Harvey's commission. "But thinking it over coolly," said Seward, "I thought it wrong to punish a man for his stupid folly, when really he had committed no crime."

We have seen that for more than a week the problem had been determined in the mind of President Lincoln. He saw not only the breadth and depth of the mighty struggle impending, but the true relation and effect of the intellectual and moral influences and physical forces to be drawn into contention. Abstractly it was enough that the Government was in the right. But to make the issue sure, he determined that in addition the rebellion should be put in the wrong. Liberty should have not only the judgment but the sympathy of mankind. In his own language, having said to them in the inaugural address, "You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors," he took pains not only to keep this declaration good, but also to keep the case so free from the power of ingenious sophistry as that the world should not be able to misunderstand it

CHAP II

Lincoln,
Special
Message,
July 4, 1861.

Towards the latter end of March, while the interviews and conversations were going on between Justice Campbell and Seward, and the Sumter affairs were a daily topic of discussion, Lincoln (to use his own words) "told Mr. Seward he might say to Justice Campbell that I should not attempt to provision the fort without giving them notice. That was after I had duly weighed the matter and come to the deliberate conclusion that that would be the best policy. If there was nothing before to bind us in honor to give such notice, I felt so bound after this word was out." It is impossible to fix the exact date of this Presidential instruction, but several allusions indicate it with sufficient nearness. A dispatch of the commissioners, under date of March 22, uses the phrase: "And what is of infinite

J G N,
Personal
Memoran
da MS

CHAP II

The Commissioners
to Toombs,
Mai 22, 1861
MS

Welles to
Lincoln,
Cabinet
Opinion,
Mai 29, 1861
MS

Campbell
to Seward,
Apl 13, 1861
Moore,
"Rebellion
Record"
Vol I Doc-
uments,
p 427

importance to us, that notice will be given him [Campbell] of any change in the existing status" So also Mr. Welles, advising the Fox expedition in the Cabinet meeting of March 29, adds, "and of communicating at the proper time the intentions of the Government to provision the fort peaceably if unmolested" Finally, as already stated, Mr Seward, on April 1, gave Campbell the written memorandum: "The President may desire to supply Sumter, but will not do so without giving notice to Governor Pickens."

Now that the Fox expedition was ready and ordered to sail, President Lincoln proceeded to carry out this part of his plan. Again, with his own hand he prepared the following instruction:

WASHINGTON, April 6, 1861

SIR You will proceed directly to Charleston, South Carolina, and if, on your arrival there, the flag of the United States shall be flying over Fort Sumter, and the fort shall not have been attacked, you will procure an interview with Governor Pickens, and read to him as follows "I am directed by the President of the United States to notify you to expect an attempt will be made to supply Fort Sumter with provisions only; and that, if such attempt be not resisted, no effort to throw in men, arms, or ammunition will be made without further notice, or in case of an attack upon the fort"

After you shall have read this to Governor Pickens, deliver to him the copy of it herein inclosed, and retain this letter yourself

But if, on your arrival at Charleston, you shall ascertain that Fort Sumter shall have been already evacuated, or surrendered by the United States force; or shall have been attacked by an opposing force, you will seek no interview with Governor Pickens, but return here forthwith."

Lincoln, In-
structions.
April 6, 1861.
MS.

This autograph manuscript draft of Lincoln's was also copied and signed "Simon Cameron, Secretary of War," and placed in the hands of R. S. Chew, a faithful clerk of the State Department, who, thus clothed with military character and authority, proceeded at once to Charleston. His own brief report states the result: "Under the foregoing order I left Washington at 6 p. m. Saturday April 6, 1861, in company with Captain Theodore Talbot, U. S. Army, and arrived at Charleston, S. C., on Monday at the same hour. Finding that Fort Sumter had neither been surrendered, evacuated nor attacked, I immediately, through Captain Talbot, requested an interview with Governor Pickens, which was at once accorded to me, and I then read to him the portion of said orders in italics, and delivered to him the copy of the same, which was furnished to me for that purpose, in the presence of Captain Talbot. Governor Pickens received the copy and said he would submit it to General Beauregard, he having, since the ratification of the Constitution of the Confederate States by South Carolina, been placed in charge of the military operations in this vicinity. General Beauregard was accordingly sent for, and the Governor read the paper to him. In reply to a remark made by Governor Pickens in reference to an answer, I informed him that I was not authorized to receive any communication from him in reply."

Chew, Report, April 8, 1861 MS

It is necessary to note briefly in this connection the action of the rebel commissioners at Washington. It has been mentioned that on April 1 they communicated to Montgomery very sanguine hopes

CHAP II

The Com-
missioners
to Toombs,
April 3, 1861
W. R., Vol
I, p. 286

Campbell
to Seward,
April 7, 1861
MS

of a peaceable adjustment. This happy dream they indulged yet some days later, notwithstanding the earlier signs of preparations for the Meigs and the Fox expeditions, which they noted and transmitted. Justice Campbell had implicit confidence in the success of his own intrigue, and the commissioners blindly built their faith upon his. "Our intermediary says they dare not deceive *him*," they wrote, "as they know we do not rely upon *them* but upon *him*." The truth was that instead of being deceived by Seward, Campbell was deceiving himself and the commissioners. Day by day, however, their faith crumbled away. The fitting out and sailing of transports and vessels of war from New York and elsewhere became more convincing than Campbell's assurances. Finally, unable longer to endure the suspense, they again appealed to their intermediary. On the morning of Sunday, April 7, Campbell wrote another note to Seward, saying that the commissioners were alarmed by the reported conversations of the President, by the military movements, and by the sailing of the *Atlantic*. He recounted the assurances given, and added: "But if I have said more than I am authorized I pray you will advise me." In reply, Seward sent the laconic answer which has been so often quoted: "Faith as to Sumter fully kept—wait and see." In public controversy Campbell long insisted that this answer meant the evacuation of Sumter and not the notice to the Governor. His own interpretation, however, made in writing at the time, refutes his later assumption. That same afternoon, at two o'clock, he wrote as follows to the commissioners:

I believe that my assurances to you, that the Government will not undertake to supply Sumter without notice to Governor Pickens, will be fully sustained by the event. In reference to Fort Pickens, I have no assurance to make. Heretofore I have felt justified in saying that whenever any measure changing the existing status prejudicially to the Confederate States is contemplated as respects Fort Pickens I shall have notice. I do not feel at liberty to say this now.

CHAP II

Campbell
to the Com-
missioners,
April 7, 1861.
MS

At this point Justice Campbell's intrigue breaks completely down, and the commissioners resume the task of negotiation. "Events since our last," they wrote to Montgomery, "have in our judgment made it our duty to require an answer to our official note of March 12. . . If Seward's reply is not satisfactory we shall consider the gauntlet of war thrown down and close our mission." Their secretary called that night at nine o'clock at Seward's residence to ask for such answer, to be delivered the next day at two o'clock, though they knew that Seward's unofficial memorandum, refusing all recognition, or reception, or negotiation, had been on the files of the State Department since March 15, waiting their readiness to receive it. It was duly placed in their hands the next afternoon (Monday, April 8), whereupon the commissioners telegraphed to Montgomery, "This Government politely declines in a written paper to recognize our official character or the power we represent. We shall rejoin and then leave the city unless otherwise ordered." Late that night a telegram from Beauregard informed them for the first time that a relief expedition was on its way to Sumter, and that the President had sent Governor Pickens notice of its coming.

The Com-
missioners
to Toombs,
April 7, 1861.
MS

Pickett,
Memoran-
dum, April
7, 1861, 9 15
P M MS

The Com-
missioners
to Toombs,
April 8, 1861,
4 P M MS.

Beaure-
gard to
Crawford,
April 8, 1861.
MS.

CHAP II

Thus, on the evening of April 8, 1861, the Montgomery authorities received decisive information from both Washington and Charleston that all their hopes of recognition or peaceful disunion were at an end, and that the desperate trial of war was at length upon them. Already to some extent forewarned of this contingency, they hastened to make all possible dispositions to meet it. The seven States of South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas were now united in the rebel Government. They were promptly notified of the changed condition of affairs, and each asked to raise a contingent of three thousand volunteers. Bragg, at Pensacola, was notified that "Our commissioners at Washington have received a flat refusal," and was instructed to put himself on the defensive, while officers, supplies, and soldiers were ordered to his support with earnestness and energy. Beauregard was once more put on the alert, and ordered to increase his vigilance and rigor. "Under no circumstances are you to allow provisions to be sent to Fort Sumter." "Major Anderson's mails must be stopped. The fort must be completely isolated." Beauregard complied with alacrity; issued orders and sent detachments to his posts and batteries, armed additional guard-boats to patrol the harbor, and called out the entire remainder of the contingent of five thousand men which had been authorized.

Governor Pickens now committed another piece of sharp practice. Beauregard's promise to Anderson was that the mails would be transmitted until further instructions. Walker's instruction was, "Anderson's mails must be stopped." In-

Walker to
Bragg,
April 8, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 457

Walker
to Beauregard, April
8, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 289
Ibid,
April 9, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 291

stead of this, General Beauregard, apparently ashamed to do so himself, permitted Governor Pickens to seize and open Anderson's mail under cover of a disingenuous plea. He wrote a notification of stoppage at eight o'clock on the evening of April 8, but did not deliver it to Anderson till 2:15 P. M. of the next day, the 9th. Anderson immediately asked the return of mails forwarded prior to the receipt of the notification. But Beauregard answered evasively, saying: "The private letters you refer to in the mail of yesterday were sent to their destination, but the public ones were sent to the Confederate Government at Montgomery, in return for the treachery of Mr. Fox, who has been reported to have violated his word given to Governor Pickens before visiting Fort Sumter." The allegation was not true. The Governor's own letter shows that he seized the mail before the notification was delivered to Anderson, and that the "reports" urged in justification were found only in letters which the Governor had opened. "I took possession of the mails this morning from Sumter and retained the packages marked 'official.' These are all sent you. The private letters are all sent as directed, to their owners. I did this because I consider a state of war is now inaugurated by the authorities at Washington, and all information of a public nature was necessary to us."

The incident of the violated mail is mentioned here rather for the purpose of showing that by such means the rebels became possessed of further information about the Fox expedition, since among the letters captured and opened by the Governor

CHAP II

Beauregard to Anderson, April 8, 1861, 8 P M W R Vol I, p 250

Anderson to Beauregard, April 9, 1861, 2 15 P M W R Vol I, p 250.

Beauregard to Anderson, April 9, 1861, W R Vol I, pp 248, 249

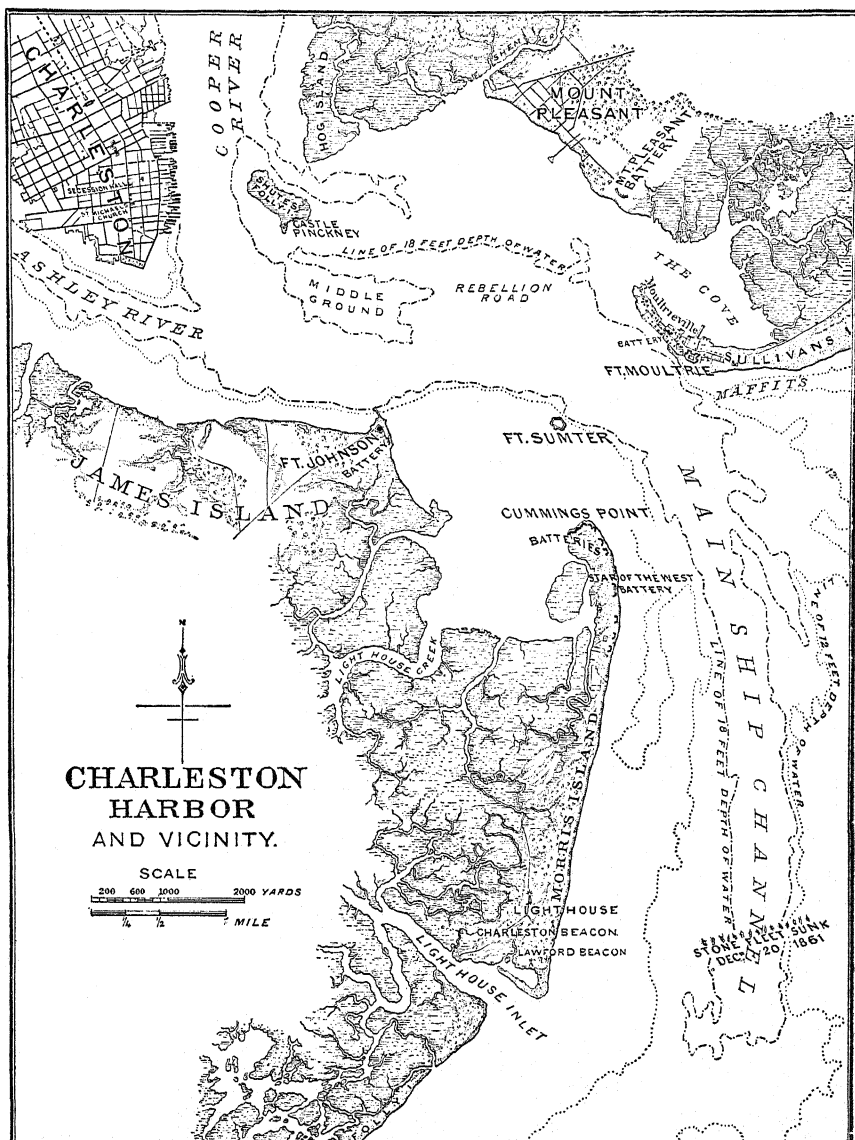
Pickens to Walker, April 9, 1861, W R Vol I, p 292.

CHAP II

was Anderson's reply to President Lincoln's instruction of April 4, which, as already mentioned, had been copied and signed by Cameron, and had reached Anderson by mail. This answer from Anderson becomes doubly interesting, as it shows us the painful struggle caused by the delusion which the distorted report of the Crawford telegram had put him under. Had he been aware that indirectly he was replying to President Lincoln himself, he might have used other language. The material portion ran as follows:

1861

I had the honor to receive by yesterday's mail the letter of the Honorable Secretary of War, dated April 4, and confess that what he there states surprises me very greatly, following, as it does, and contradicting so positively the assurance Mr. Crawford telegraphed he was authorized to make. I trust that this matter will be at once put in a correct light, as a movement made now, when the South has been erroneously informed that none such will be attempted, would produce most disastrous results throughout our country. It is of course now too late for me to give any advice in reference to the proposed scheme of Captain Fox. I fear that its result cannot fail to be disastrous to all concerned. Even with his boat at our walls the loss of life (as I think I mentioned to Mr. Fox) in unloading her will more than pay for the good to be accomplished by the expedition, which keeps us, if I can maintain possession of this work, out of position, surrounded by strong works which must be carried to make this fort of the least value to the United States Government. We have not oil enough to keep a light in the lantern for one night. The boats will have, therefore, to rely at night entirely upon other marks. I ought to have been informed that this expedition was to come. Colonel Lamon's remark convinced me that the idea, merely hinted at to me by Captain Fox, would not be carried out. We shall strive to do our duty, though I frankly say that my heart is not in the war, which I see



is to be thus commenced That God will still avert it and cause us to resort to pacific measures to maintain our rights, is my ardent prayer

CHAP II

Anderson
to Thomas,
April 8, 1861
W. R. Vol.
I, p. 294.

The concluding phrases of this letter have been severely criticized without adequate reason. Read in the light of the long neglect which Anderson had suffered at the hands of President Buchanan, and in his ignorance of President Lincoln's order of March 9, which General Scott had omitted to repeat to post-commanders, he felt indeed as if he were forsaken by his Government. The condition in which he found himself seemed to place the entire responsibility of peace or war upon his own acts, and rendered him morbidly anxious to avoid any imputation of offense. We can easily conceive that any sensitive officer, laboring under the same error of information, would have felt as he did, that the circumstances justified the language of his protest.

However much they may have deplored the necessity, Anderson and his garrison made ready to do their duty. As a final effort Foster directed his engineering skill and employed his imprisoned workmen in constructing a hasty protection for the expected boat or boats, and in preparing "ladders and run-ways to take in reenforcements and provisions at the embrasures rapidly, one embrasure being enlarged so as to admit barrels, and also cleared the passage around to the main gate. A large stone traverse was also commenced to cover the main gates from the fire from Cummings Point. The masons were put at work cutting openings through the walls of the officers' quarters, so as to admit a free communication through

CHAP II

Foster,
Engineer
Journal,
April 9, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 17

them." For greater security the whole garrison took up quarters in the casemates; the only six needles in the fort were employed night and day in making up a store of cartridge-bags from extra clothing and surplus blankets; water-pipes and faucets were put in order against fire, and ammunition distributed; labors during which their last bread was consumed.

Since the place and the time of the conflict could now be determined within very narrow limits, the rebels were also active in their preparations. Rumor had somewhat magnified the proportions of the coming armament; and every nerve was strained in counter efforts. In his letter to Montgomery Governor Pickens predicted a "bloody fight." "We now have," he wrote, "3700 men at the different posts and batteries, and will have by to-morrow 3000 more, which I have called down. From my calculation I think they will have about 2600, and will attempt to land in launch boats, with twenty-four and twelve pounders, and it will probably be on the lower end of Morris Island next the light-house. If so, we will have a fine rifle regiment to give them a cordial welcome from behind sand-hills (that are natural fortifications) and two Dahlgren guns will be right on them, besides four twenty-four pounders in battery. I have 400 fine Enfield rifles, that have been practiced at 900 yards, and on that island altogether we have now 1950 men, and are increasing it to-day. . . We expect the attack about six o'clock in the morning on account of the tide."

Pickens to
Walker,
April 9, 1861
W R Vol
I, pp 292,
293

Captain H J. Hartstene, however, with his practical sailor's knowledge and cooler professional

judgment, made a different forecast of the nature and chances of the expected attempt; after a night of actual duty in command of the harbor guard-boats, he was not so sanguine in his predictions. "It is my opinion that Sumter can be relieved," he wrote to Beauregard, "by boats from vessels outside of the bars, on any night as dark as the last; or, if we have to take it, you had better be making a beginning. If a vessel of war is placed off each bar, when Sumter opens, I will lose all my steamers, as there will be no escape for me. Therefore, before firing, these steamers should be called in." Beauregard did not neglect his subordinate's warning; he dealt out fresh encouragement to his officers; told them "the word impossible must be ignored", made arrangements to illuminate the scene of action with floating light-wood fires, and "Drummond lights," and gave special directions to concentrate the fire of his batteries on the landing-place at Sumter.

CHAP II

Hartstene
to Beauregard, April
10, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 299
Beauregard to
Dunovant,
Apr 10, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 300

CHAPTER III

THE FALL OF SUMTER

CHAP III

PRESIDENT LINCOLN in deciding the Sumter question had adopted a simple but effective policy. To use his own words, he determined to "send bread to Anderson"; if the rebels fired on that, they would not be able to convince the world that he had begun civil war. All danger of misapprehension, all accusations of "invasion" and "subjugation," would fall to the ground before that paramount duty not only to the nation, but to humanity. This was universal statesmanship reduced to its simplest expression. To this end he had ordered the relief expedition to sail, and sent open notice to Governor Pickens of its coming. His own duty thus discharged, no less in kindness than in honesty, the American people would take care of the result.

That he by this time expected resistance and hostilities, though unrecorded, is reasonably certain. The presence of armed ships with the expedition, and their instructions to fight their way to the fort in case of opposition, show that he believed the arbitrament of the sword to be at hand. His authorization to Anderson to capitulate after the ordinary risks of war is evidence that he did not expect a decisive battle or a conclusive victory. Whether

the expedition would fail or succeed was a question of minor importance. He was not playing a game of military strategy with Beauregard. He was looking through Sumter to the loyal States; beyond the insulted flag to the avenging nation.

CHAP III

The rebels, on their part, had only a choice of evils. Their scheme of peaceable secession demanded incompatible conditions—the union of the South and the division of the North. If they set war in motion, they would lose their Democratic allies in the free States. If they hesitated to fight, the revolution would collapse in the slave States. As usual on such occasions, rash advice carried the day. Said an uncompromising fire-eater to Jefferson Davis and his Cabinet, “unless you sprinkle blood in the face of the people of Alabama, they will be back in the old Union in less than ten days.”

McPherson, “History of the Rebellion,” pp 112, 113

The possibility that Sumter might be relieved by boats on a dark night evidently decided the rebel authorities to order an immediate attack on the fort.¹ They could not afford the risk of its successful defense. Its capture was necessary to the life of the rebellion. Therefore, on the 10th of April, they telegraphed to Beauregard:

If you have no doubt of the authorized character of the agent who communicated to you the intention of the

¹ “As, in consequence of a communication from the President of the United States to the Governor of South Carolina, we were in momentary expectation of an attempt to reenforce Fort Sumter, or of a descent upon our coast to that end from the United States fleet then lying at the entrance of the harbor, it was manifestly an imperative necessity to reduce the fort as speedily as possible, and not to wait until the ships and the fort should unite in a combined attack upon us”—General Beauregard, Report, April 27, 1861 W R Vol I, p 31

CHAP III

Walker
to Beaure-
gard, April
10, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 297

Washington Government to supply Fort Sumter by force, you will at once demand its evacuation, and, if this is refused, proceed in such manner as you may determine to reduce it

Beaure-
gard to An-
derson,
April 11, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 13
Foster,
Journal,
April 11, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 18

At 2 P. M. on the 11th that officer accordingly made the demand, offering facilities to remove the troops, with their arms and private property, and the privilege of saluting their flag. The demand was laid before a council of officers, who voted a unanimous refusal. "I have the honor," thereupon replied Anderson, "to acknowledge the receipt of your communication demanding the evacuation of this fort; and to say in reply thereto, that it is a demand with which I regret that my sense of honor, and of my obligations to my Government, prevent my compliance"; at the same time thanking him for his compliments and courteous terms. The rebel aides-de-camp who bore these messages engaged in informal conversation with Anderson, in the course of which, with somewhat careless freedom, he said to them: "Gentlemen, if you do not batter the fort to pieces about us, we shall be starved out in a few days." The phrase was telegraphed to Montgomery, whence instructions came back once more to offer time to deliver up the fort; whereupon, near midnight of the 11th, Beauregard again wrote:

Anderson
to Beaure-
gard, April
11, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 13

Chesnut,
Lee, and
Chisholm to
Adj-Gen
Jones,
April 11, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 59

Beaure-
gard to An-
derson,
April 11, 1861,
11 P M
W R Vol
I, p 14

If you will state the time at which you will evacuate Fort Sumter, and agree that in the mean time you will not use your guns against us unless ours shall be employed against Fort Sumter, we will abstain from opening fire upon you

It was long past midnight when the aides reached the fort and handed this second message to Ander-

son. Anderson in return submitted to them the following proposition in writing: CHAP. III

I will, if provided with the proper and necessary means of transportation, evacuate Fort Sumter by noon on the 15th instant should I not receive prior to that time controlling instructions from my Government, or additional supplies; and that I will not in the mean time open my fire upon your forces unless compelled to do so by some hostile act against this fort or the flag of my Government, by the forces under your command or by some portion of them, or by the perpetration of some act showing a hostile intention on your part against this fort or the flag it bears.

Anderson
to Beauregard, April
12, 1861,
2 30 A M
Victor,
"History
Southern
Rebellion"
Vol II, p
74

This cautious and resolute answer was not what the rebel commander desired; but apparently he expected nothing else, for he had given his aides discretionary authority to refuse the stipulation. They retired to an adjoining room to consult and compose their answer, and at twenty minutes past three o'clock on the morning of Friday, April 12, 1861, handed Anderson their written notice that the rebel batteries would open their fire upon the fort in one hour. Then taking leave, they entered their boat and proceeded directly to Fort Johnson, and gave to the officer commanding that post "the order to open fire at the time indicated."

Chesnut
and Lee to
Jones,
Apr 12, 1861.
W R Vol
I, p 60

Unwelcome as was the prospect of the impending conflict, it must in one sense have been a relief as a contrast to the uncertainty in which the fate of the garrison had hung for more than three months. The decisive moment of action was at last reached, and the spirit and strength of every inmate of the fort leaped into new life under the impulse of combat. Until the full dawning of the morning, nothing could be done within the fort. Anderson gave the necessary orders about the

CHAP III coming attack. The sentinels were all withdrawn from their exposed stations on the parapet; every gate and opening was closed; the men were strictly enjoined not to leave the shelter of the casemates except on special summons. These few preparations hastily completed, Sumter seemed to the outside world to have relapsed into the security and silence of a peaceful sleep.

The fort had been built on an artificial island midway in the mouth of Charleston harbor; it was three miles from the city, but projecting points of the neighboring islands inclosed it in a triangle. On these the rebels had built their siege-works—to the north-east Fort Moultrie on Sullivan's Island, distant 1800 yards; to the south, the Cummings Point batteries on Morris Island, distant 1300 yards; to the west, Fort Johnson on James Island, distant 2500 yards. Some were built merely to oppose the expected reinforcements through the harbor channels; most of them were earth-works. Two were constructed of wood and protected with railroad iron; one of these had been designed to serve as a floating battery, but proving a failure in this object, was now advantageously grounded behind a protecting sea-wall. Altogether there were from fourteen to nineteen of these batteries, mounting a total of thirty guns and seventeen mortars, manned and supported by a volunteer force of four to six thousand men. The greater part were holiday soldiers, but among their officers were a dozen or two formerly belonging to the Federal army and possessed of a thorough military education. To these the management of the enterprise was mainly confided.



GENERAL ABNER DOUBLEDAY.

Fort Sumter was a scarcely completed work, dating back to the period of smooth-bore guns of small caliber; its walls were of brick, forty feet high and eight feet thick; it was pierced for one hundred and forty guns, to be mounted in two tiers of casemates and on the parapet. But when Anderson inspected it on his arrival in November previous, the brick-work of walls and casemates was still unfinished, and only a few guns were mounted. Foster, the engineer in charge, had, with limited help and materials, and in the face of constant obstacles and discouragements, pushed the work towards completion.

CHAP. III

F J Porter,
Inspection
Report,
Nov 11, 1860
W R Vol
I, pp. 71, 72

There was now a total of forty-eight guns mounted and ready for use, though furnished with very rude and insufficient appliances. Of these, twenty-one were in the casemates and twenty-seven on the parapet. To man and support them Anderson had a garrison of 9 commissioned officers, 68 non-commissioned officers and privates, 8 musicians, and 43 non-combatant laborers—a total of 128 souls. We shall see that while the opposing artillery was nearly equal in number, there existed, in fact, a great disparity in its quality. Not only was Anderson's fire diffused and that of the enemy concentrated, but the rebels had seventeen 10-inch mortars, which could deliver a vertical fire and drop large shells into the fort; while Anderson had nothing to answer them but the horizontal fire of his guns to throw missiles against the face of the rebel bomb-proofs, formed of heavy sand-banks or sloping railroad iron.

April, 1861

The inhabitants of Charleston were informed of the intended bombardment; months of speech-

CHAP III making, drilling, and war preparation had excited an intense eagerness to witness the fight. In the yet prevailing darkness they came pouring out of their houses by a common impulse, and thronged to the wharves and buildings on the bay, where they sought advantageous positions to behold the long-wished-for spectacle. At about half-past four, as the dim outline of Fort Sumter began to define itself in the morning twilight, they saw a shell rise from the mortar-batteries near Fort Johnson, and make its slow and graceful curve upon Sumter. This was the signal. Gun after gun and battery after battery responded to its summons, and in less than an hour all the besieging works were engaged in an active cannonade.

April 12

Inside of Sumter the garrison received the attack with a certain degree of deliberation. The first care was to note the effect of the firing. The opening shots of the rebels were badly aimed, and fell wide of the mark. With the advancing daylight their gunners obtained a better range; the solid shot began to strike the face of the wall, and the shells from the mortars to explode with alarming precision over the parapet. Nevertheless, no great damage was done. One vital point was, however, quickly decided. Housed in the casemates, the garrison was comparatively safe; but out on the unprotected parapet, under the concentrated fire of all the rebel artillery, Anderson's little handful of cannoneers would melt away like frost in the morning sun. With a full war garrison he could have replaced officers and men as they were shot down; but with only sufficient trained force to work nine guns, he dared not risk

the loss of a single man. His first reluctant duty, CHAP. III. therefore, was to order the abandonment of all his barbette guns. These were twenty-seven in number, more than half his available armament, and comprising nearly all his pieces of large caliber. Through this necessity alone, Fort Sumter was largely shorn of its offensive power. His twenty-one casemate guns, of which only four were forty-two pounders, and the remainder thirty-twos, constituted the total of his fighting artillery.

The rations of bread having been exhausted a day or two before, the command breakfasted on pork and water, and at about seven o'clock Captain Abner Doubleday, the ranking officer, took his station at a casemate gun and opened fire with a solid shot, against the formidable iron-clad battery on Cummings Point. Fully roused by the combined excitements of resentment and danger, the men sprang with alacrity to their duty; even the forty-three engineer workmen, forgetting their character of non-combatants, volunteered and rendered active service in the defense. In fact, the enthusiasm of the garrison somewhat outstripped its prudence. They began the engagement with a supply of only seven hundred cartridges; by the middle of the day this stock had become so much reduced that the fort was compelled to slacken its fire. From this time only six guns were kept in action—two towards Morris Island, two towards Fort Moultrie, and two towards the batteries on the west end of Sullivan's Island. These were also fired at longer intervals, while the only six needles in the fort were kept busy sewing up cartridge-bags out

CHAP III of the extra clothing, blankets, hospital sheets, and even coarse paper.

So the unequal combat went on throughout the first day. The journal of the bombardment kept by Captain Foster shows that no very decisive damage was effected on either side. From the fort there were occasional good shots. The iron-clad batteries were repeatedly struck, but the light balls bounded off their sloping roofs. At other batteries they buried themselves harmlessly in the rebel sand-banks. Embrasures were struck; groups of rebel officers and men allowing their curiosity to draw them out from their shelter hustled pell-mell back into their bomb-proofs; an incautious schooner, receiving a ball, hauled down her Confederate flag and hurried out of range; the two forty-two pounders bearing on Moultrie silenced a gun, riddled the barracks and quarters, and tore three holes through the rebel flag. Foster's report says:

The effect of the enemy's fire upon Fort Sumter during the day was very marked in respect to the vertical fire. This was so well directed, and so well sustained, that from the seventeen mortars engaged in firing ten-inch shells one-half of the shells came within or exploded above the parapet of the fort, and only about ten buried themselves in the soft earth of the parade without exploding. . . The effect of the direct fire from the enemy's guns was not so marked as the vertical. For several hours' firing from the commencement, a large proportion of their shot missed the fort. Subsequently it improved, and did considerable damage to the roof and upper story of the barracks and quarters, and to the tops of the chimneys on the gorge . . . The shots from the guns in the batteries on the west end of Sullivan's Island did not produce any considerable direct effect, but many of them

took the gorge in reverse in their fall, completely riddling the officers' quarters, even down to the first story, so great was the angle of fall of many of the balls

CHAP III
W R Vol
I, pp 20,
21

One additional danger manifested itself: three times during the day the wooden buildings in the fort caught fire, but were extinguished without great difficulty, being low and easily accessible. The rebel batteries, provided with several furnaces, now and then fired a hot shot; but whether these or bursting shells started the burning the officers could not determine. The very work of ruin going on in the building used as officers' quarters aided in restraining the flames. The hall-ways were provided with iron water-tanks, which, being soon perforated by cannon-balls, deluged the chambers, and rendered the wood-work difficult to ignite.

Amid experience of this kind the eventful 12th of April, the first day of the Sumter bombardment, drew to a close. The fire of Sumter ceased; the direct fire of the rebel batteries slackened, and was finally discontinued; only the mortars kept up a slow and sullen bombardment through the night at intervals of from ten to fifteen minutes. The work of sewing up cartridge-bags was continued until midnight; sentinels and lookouts were stationed to watch for the possible coming of boats from the fleet—or of boats bearing a storming-party from the rebel camps. But the night proved dark and rainy, with a continuance of the prevailing gale, making the waters of the harbor too rough for either of these undertakings. Under cover of the thick gloom, Foster, the engineer, ventured outside the walls and satisfied himself “by personal inspection that the exterior of the work was not

CHAP III

Foster,
Journal,
Apr 12, 1861
W. R. Vol
I, p 21

damaged to any considerable extent, and that all the facilities for taking in supplies in case they arrived were as complete as circumstances would admit" Three United States men-of-war had been seen off the bar during the afternoon, and the fort had dipped its flag in signal to them What was the fleet doing?

April, 1861

The several vessels of the Fox expedition were scarcely at sea when they encountered a driving gale. Captain Fox himself, who sailed in the *Baltic* on the morning of the 9th, was yet ignorant of the changed destination of the flag-ship *Powhatan*. This was doubtless an entirely unintentional omission, arising out of the cross-purposes and system of profound secrecy which for a few days prevailed at Washington. The *Baltic* reached the rendezvous off Charleston just in time to hear the opening guns of the bombardment. The *Harriet Lane* was already there. The *Pawnee* arrived at daylight. There was an apparent conflict of orders, and a hesitation to cooperate. The *Baltic* and the *Harriet Lane* stood in to offer to carry provisions to the fort; but as they neared the bar of the harbor, they saw by the quick-flashing rebel guns that the war was already begun. At this intelligence the commander of the *Pawnee* declared his intention to go in and "share the fate of his brethren of the army." Fox, cool and practical, brought him back to reason by explaining the Government instructions, and induced him to await the chance of rendering more effective service. The two ships of war anchored near the bar, and the *Baltic* stood off and on to await the arrival of the *Powhatan* and the tugs.

This, however, was a vain hope. The *Powhatan* CHAP III was on her way to Pensacola, the tugs had been scattered by the storm. The *Freeborn* was not permitted to leave New York. The *Uncle Ben* was driven into Wilmington and fell into the hands of the rebels. The *Yankee* failed to reach the rendezvous till long after the affair was over. But, ignorant of these disasters, and hoping hourly for the arrival of the missing vessels, the fleet waited and made signals all the long afternoon and through the dark and stormy night, while the lookouts in the garrison were anxiously scanning the turbulent waters of the bay for the coming of the boats, and the rebel gunners stood by their channel batteries in the drenching rain hoping to intercept and sink them.

Captain Fox and the officers of the fleet were sorely disappointed at the non-arrival of the *Powhatan* and the tugs. The former had on board the armed launches and the necessary sailors to man them; the tugs were to have carried the supplies and perhaps drawn the boats in tow. With these facilities for transportation, there is every probability that they would have reached the fort. The storm was both an advantage and a hindrance; it increased the friendly darkness to hide them from the rebel gunners, but at the same time it lashed the waters of the bay into fury. When morning came, such had been the pitchy gloom of the night and the roaring of the rain and the surf, that the commanders of the rebel batteries were unable to report that their watch and guard had been completely effective. "Opinions differ," wrote one of their best officers, "as to whether anything got

CHAP III

Whiting
to Beaure-
gard, April
13, 1861 MS

into Sumter last night. They may or may not. The night was dark and occasionally stormy, and a heavy sea running. If anything did, it could not have been very extensive."

With the morning of the 13th, Captain Fox and the officers began to despair of the *Powhatan* and the tugs. Unwilling to remain mere spectators of the fight, they cast about to use such expedients as presented themselves. Among the merchant vessels by this time collected at the bar, awaiting the issue of the contest, was an ice schooner; this they impressed and began to prepare for an attempt to enter the following night. There were plenty of volunteers among both officers and seamen for the hazardous duty; but long before night-fall the bombardment had come to an end. That Captain Fox's undertaking thus terminated without direct practical result was not his fault. With characteristic generosity and truthfulness, President Lincoln took upon himself the principal blame for its failure. He wrote to Fox soon afterwards:

The practicability of your plan was not in fact brought to a test. By reason of a gale, well known in advance to be possible and not improbable, the tugs, an essential part of the plan, never reached the ground; while, by an accident for which you were in no wise responsible, and possibly I to some extent was, you were deprived of a war-vessel, with her men, which you deemed of great importance to the enterprise. . . You and I both anticipated that the cause of the country would be advanced by making the attempt to provision Fort Sumter, even if it should fail; and it is no small consolation now to feel that our anticipation is justified by the result.

Lincoln
to Fox,
May 1, 1861

"Fort Sumter opened early and spitefully, and paid especial attention to Fort Moultrie—almost

every shot grazing the crest of the parapet, and crashing through the quarters." This was the rebel report of the beginning of the second day's bombardment, April 13. The garrison of Sumter was refreshed by a night of comparatively secure rest in their casemates, and, no doubt, a hearty breakfast of pork and water; and, so long as the stock of cartridges made up during the night held out, they kept up so brisk a fire from their few guns that the rebels began to be confirmed in the opinion that the fort had really been reenforced. On their side the besiegers also increased both the speed of firing and their accuracy of aim, and seeing that they were making no headway in the test of breaching the walls they began to pay more attention to the use of red-hot shot.

CHAP III

Ripley,
Report,
Apr 16, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 41

Foster,
Journal,
Apr 13, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 22

Thus far this unequal contest of nearly fifty concentrating guns, replied to by about six, had gone on without material damage to either party—showing, in proportion to the strength of each, nothing but indented brick walls or displaced sand-bags, battered chimneys and perforated barracks, a few slight contusions from splinters, and one or two disabled guns. According to all the reports, it might have proceeded at this rate the whole week, and the waste of ammunition would have been its most serious feature. But at this stage a new element entered into the strife, and soon turned the fortune of the day against the unlucky garrison of Sumter.

At about nine o'clock in the morning, the roof of the officers' quarters once more caught fire, either from a bursting shell or a red-hot shot; and this time the distance from water, and the

CHAP III exposure to the enemy's missiles, made it impossible to extinguish the flames. Worse than all, it quickly became evident that the fire would soon encircle the magazine and make it imperative to close it. At Captain Foster's suggestion, all hands not employed at the guns sprang to the work of taking out a supply of powder. About fifty barrels were thus secured, distributed for safety in the various casemates, and covered with wet blankets, when the fire and heat so far increased that it was necessary to close the heavy metal door of the magazine and bank it up with earth. The enemy, observing the smoke, redoubled the fire of the batteries; a strong south wind carried the flames to all the barracks inside the fort; and though the men fought the advance of the fire, they were at length compelled to give way and take refuge in the casemates. Even here they were not safe; the course of the wind was such as to fill every nook and corner of the fort with blinding, stifling smoke; the men crouched close down to the floors, covered their faces with wet handkerchiefs, or took exposed stations near the embrasures to obtain a breath of fresh air.

As if this were not enough, a still subtler danger pursued them. The rapid conflagration and sweeping wind had filled the air with fire-flakes, and these drifted on the strong currents and counter-currents into the casemates to such an extent as to ignite the beds, boxes, and various small articles hastily collected there. Under such circumstances the fifty barrels of powder saved with so much exertion from the magazine could no longer be kept, and upon Anderson's order all but five barrels

were thrown through the embrasures of the fort into the sea. Noon had meanwhile come, and, engaged in these pressing occupations, the garrison had ceased firing. By-and-by the wind changed a little, rendering the situation somewhat safer and more comfortable. There were but few cartridges left; still an occasional shot was fired, which the rebels themselves, roused to admiration of the garrison, received with cheers.

A new incident now engaged general attention. The flag-staff of the fort, struck seven times during the first day and three the second, fell at about one o'clock in the afternoon. Lieutenant Snyder and a couple of men, without much delay, again hoisted the flag on a jury-mast extemporized on the parapet. The rebels had however noted the fall of the flag, and sent several communications to Sumter. The first messenger was the ubiquitous and eccentric Senator Wigfall. He was a colonel on the staff of Beauregard, who sent him for special duty to the commander of Morris Island. From there, after a short consultation among the rebel officers, he was dispatched to Fort Sumter to make inquiries. He crossed the bay dramatically in an open boat, with his handkerchief tied to his sword for a flag of truce, and clambered up the wall to an accessible embrasure, where, one account says, an astonished artilleryman, seeing this unique apparition, summarily made him a prisoner of war.

Donbleday,
"Forts
Sumter and
Moultrie,"
pp 162, 163

Officers soon came, however, and after a somewhat spirited dialogue, and some further waving of Wigfall's sword and handkerchief out of an embrasure, to which the rebel batteries paid no attention, he was taken into Anderson's presence. He

CHAP III made a complimentary speech to Anderson, requesting that hostilities might be suspended and terms of evacuation arranged. What then occurred Captain Foster reports as follows:

The commanding officer desiring to know what terms he came to offer, Mr Wigfall replied, "Any terms that you may desire,—your own terms,—the precise nature of which General Beauregard will arrange with you." The commanding officer then accepted the conditions, saying that the terms he accepted were those proposed by General Beauregard on the 11th, namely: to evacuate the fort with his command, taking arms and all private and company property, saluting the United States flag as it was lowered, and being conveyed, if he desired it, to any Northern port. With this understanding Mr. Wigfall left, and the white flag was raised and the United States flag lowered by order of the commanding officer.

Foster, Report, April
13, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 23

The officious Wigfall had not been gone a great while when two messages arrived at Sumter from General Beauregard—the first to inquire whether Anderson needed assistance, and the second to tender him the use of a fire-engine and the services of a surgeon, both of which had been brought from the city. All of these Anderson declined with thanks, saying he had no wounded, that the fire was by this time nearly burned out, and that he thought the magazine safe. From these interviews Anderson now learned that Beauregard was entirely ignorant of Wigfall's mission or his own capitulation. He explained the circumstances, and threatened to hoist his flag again. He was persuaded, however, first to submit the matter to be fully reported at headquarters. General Beauregard, after some parley, ratified Wigfall's unauthorized proceeding and accepted Anderson's terms

in detail. By eight o'clock on Saturday evening the capitulation was definitely arranged, and on the following day, Sunday, April 14, Anderson and his command sailed northward in the *Baltic*, which had come to the relief of Sumter.

CHAP III

1861

In the bombardment of Sumter the insurgents for the third time made active, aggressive war upon the United States, even if we leave out of sight the occupation of forts by simple entrance or by the show of force, the building of batteries to menace Sumter, and receiving the surrender made by Twiggs in Texas. In fact, since the 27th of December, a continued series of acts had been perpetrated by them, not only outraging the authority of, but levying actual war against, the United States.

The rebels indulged in great rejoicing over their victory. Charleston, which had for two days witnessed the bombardment almost *en masse*, was once more vociferous with speeches and ablaze with bonfires; while at Montgomery the insurgent Secretary of War ordered an official salute to celebrate the capture, and to emphasize his prediction of the previous evening that the rebel flag would "float over the dome of the old Capitol at Washington before the 1st of May."

Moore,
"Rebellion
Record"
Vol I, Doc-
uments,
p 138

Looking back now at the events of the first month of Lincoln's Administration, we must wonder at the impression which prevailed then, and which has so often been expressed by impulsive men since, that he was too slow in making his decision to provision and reenforce Fort Sumter.

We find that on the 15th of March, only ten days after his first information about the condition

1861.

CHAP III of the fort, he formally asked the written opinion of his Cabinet on the subject; and that on the 6th of April, only three weeks later, he gave his final order that the expedition should proceed on its mission. The intervening time was spent by him in consulting his Cabinet and his military and naval officers about possible plans for relief and reenforcement; about alternative policies to be pursued; watching the culminating treason in the South and the slowly swelling loyalty in the North; awaiting the end of the contradictory words and acts of the Virginia Convention, whose majority protested Unionism in public and at last voted secession in secret; using the delay which the rebels supposed they had contrived for their own benefit for preparing the Sumter expedition; making the individual members of his Cabinet responsible to the party and to the country for the advice they gave; and by all this gaining a coveted "choice of position" and allowing the rebels to attack and thus consolidate the North.

When he finally gave the order that the fleet should sail he was master of the situation; master of his Cabinet; master of the moral attitude and issues of the struggle; master of the public opinion which must arise out of the impending conflict; master if the rebels hesitated or repented, because they would thereby forfeit their prestige with the South; master if they persisted, for he would then command a united North. And all this was done, it must be remembered, not in the retirement which gives calm reflection, but after the rush and hurry of a triumphal journey and the parade of an inauguration, in the confusion of

conflicting counsel, the worry of preliminary appointments, the prevalence of an atmosphere of treason and insurrection, and the daily defection of Government officials. CHAP III

In the face of such self-assertion and victory, the final verdict can never be that he was tardy or remiss; to have acted more peremptorily in that strange crisis, when all men's minds were simply groping and drifting, would have brought upon him the just criticism of recklessness. No act of his will gain him greater credit than his kindly forbearance and patient wisdom in allowing full time and reflection for the ultimate decision at this supreme juncture. He had said in his inaugural: "In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The Government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors." This promise to the South he kept in its most vital spirit and meaning. An autocratic ruler might have acted more arbitrarily; but in a representative government it would have been imprudent to do otherwise than to await and rely upon the slow but mighty anger of an outraged patriotism.

CHAPTER IV

THE CALL TO ARMS

CHAP IV.

PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S decision and orders to prepare the Sumter and Pickens expeditions brought him face to face with the serious possibilities of civil war; and better to understand any military problems with which he might have to deal, he wrote to General Scott on the 1st of April, as follows: "Would it impose too much labor on General Scott to make short, comprehensive, daily reports to me of what occurs in his department, including movements by himself, and under his orders, and the receipt of intelligence? If not, I will thank him to do so." General Scott

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complied with the request, and from the 1st of April to the 4th of May sent the President nearly every day a short confidential memorandum in his own handwriting. The whole series forms a journal of the highest interest; and portions of it show better than any comment what was being done by the new Administration to meet the crisis which the Fort Sumter bombardment precipitated upon the country.

"General Scott's daily report, No. 3,"—so indorsed in Lincoln's handwriting and dated April 3, 1861,—in part runs thus:



GENERAL WINFIELD SCOTT.

There will remain in Washington a detachment of cavalry recruits from Carlisle recruiting depot, about eighty men and horses; Magruder's horse artillery; Griffin's ditto, belonging to the Military Academy and now needed there; Elzey's foot artillery and Haskin's ditto. The companies of foot artillery are acting as infantry. The number of marines at the Washington Navy Yard varies. We heard to-day that the number now there is some 200. There is not another company of regulars within reach of Washington, except seven at Fort Monroe, making about 400 men, the minimum force needed there under existing circumstances; one company at the Fayetteville arsenal, N C, to guard arms and ammunition against a thick population of blacks, a garrison of recruits (50) at Fort Washington, ten miles below us, a garrison of 100 recruits in Fort McHenry, Baltimore; about 750 recruits in New York harbor; 220 ditto at Newport Barracks opposite to Cincinnati, and about 350 men at Jefferson Barracks and the St Louis arsenal near by, mostly recruits

CHAP IV.

MS.

This memorandum was supplemented two days later (April 5) by a detailed report from the Adjutant-General to the President, which showed the full strength of the army of the United States and its distribution to be as follows: Department of the East, 3894; Department of the West, 3584; Department of Texas, 2258; Department of New Mexico, 2624; Department of Utah, 685; Department of the Pacific, 3382; miscellaneous, 686; grand total, officers and men, 17,113.

MS

General Scott's daily report, April 5, 1861:

I have nothing of special interest to report to-day; but that machinations against the Government and this capital are secretly going on all around us,—in Virginia, in Maryland, and here, as well as farther south,—I have no doubt. I cannot, however, say that they are as yet formidable, or are likely ever to come to a head. I have no

CHAP IV policemen at my service, and no fund for the payment of
detectives, but under the circumstances recommend that
such agents should be at once employed in Baltimore,
Annapolis, Washington, Alexandria, Richmond, and Nor-
folk For the reasons stated, I am not prepared to sug-
gest that a militia force should be called out to defend
this Capital, under section 2 of the militia act, passed
February 28, 1795 The necessity of such call, however,
MS may not be very distant

General Scott's daily report, April 8, 1861:

For the defense of the Government, more troops are
wanted. The steamer with the dismounted cavalry (six
companies) from Texas, must be in New York to-day or
to-morrow, to be followed by another steamer, with about
the same number of troops, from Texas, in a week.
There is a growing apprehension of danger here in the
mean time I rely on the presence of a third battery of
flying artillery (Sherman's) by Saturday next It is com-
ing from Minnesota Three other companies of artillery
on foot, serving as infantry, will be at New York, from
the same quarter, in fourteen days All these reenforce-
ments, excepting Sherman's battery, may be too late for
this place For the interval I have sent Colonel Smith
(the immediate commander of all the forces in the Dis-
trict of Columbia) to learn what number of reliable vol-
unteers can be obtained in this city, and have also desired
him to see whether the companies already here may not
be advantageously concentrated near to the President's
square. I beg leave to suggest that a small war steamer,
to cruise between Alexandria and the Long Bridge over
the Potomac, would be of great importance to the system
MS of defense that we are planning.

General Scott's daily report, April 9, 1861:

I suggested to the Secretary of War yesterday the call-
ing out, say ten companies, of the militia or (by substi-
tution) uniformed volunteers of this city to aid in the
defense of the public buildings and other public property
of the Capital against "an invasion or insurrection, or

probable prospect thereof" The necessity for this additional force, and the manner of employing it, were yesterday pretty fully discussed before the Secretary of War by Colonel Smith, Colonel Stone (two most excellent officers), and myself Colonel Stone, inspector-general to Major-General Weightman's division, thinks that twice that number of loyal volunteers can be promptly furnished by the division, and I apprehend that the twenty companies may be deemed necessary in a few days I hope that the President may give the Secretary of War the authority to make the call for ten companies at once.

CHAP IV

I have this moment received the President's instructions of this date, through the Secretary of War, on the safety of this District

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General Scott's daily report, April 13, 1861:

The two companies of dismounted cavalry arrived last night, as I had anticipated in my report of yesterday At my instance the Secretary of War has called for four other companies of District volunteers, which will make in all fifteen companies of this description for the defense of the Capital, besides six companies of regulars, the marines at the navy yard, and (I hope very soon) the war steamer to cruise on the Potomac between the Long Bridge and a point a little below Alexandria The next regular reinforcements to be expected here are Sherman's battery of flying artillery from Minnesota, and the companies of foot artillery from the same quarter, in five and seven days, and a portion of the troops expected in the next steamer from Texas From the same steamer I shall have the means of reenforcing Fort McHenry (at Baltimore), a most important point

MS

These extracts show us the steps which were being quietly taken by the Government to meet the possible dangers growing out of the Fox expedition to Charleston. They included every resource which the regular army then afforded; and to call upon the militia of the States was, of course, at that moment out of the question, as it would have frus-

CHAP IV trated the very result the President had planned and anticipated.

The Sumter fleet finally at sea, the official note sent to Governor Pickens, and the work of enrolling militia for the defense of Washington progressing so satisfactorily, Lincoln again set himself, during the brief respite, to the work of making the new appointments. Ordinarily this is only an act of official favor or partisan reward, which may be performed at leisure; but then it was a work of pressing need, because of the imperative duty of substituting faithful and loyal agents for indifferent or treasonable ones in the public service. That such abounded, the numerous resignations and still more plentiful avowals made manifest beyond a doubt.

The city was full of strangers; the White House full of applicants from the North. At any hour of the day one might see at the outer door and on the staircase, one line going, one coming. In the anteroom and in the broad corridor adjoining the President's office there was a restless and persistent crowd,—ten, twenty, sometimes fifty, varying with the day and hour,—each one in pursuit of one of the many crumbs of official patronage. They walked the floor; they talked in groups; they scowled at every arrival and blessed every departure; they wrangled with the door-keepers for the right of entrance; they intrigued with them for surreptitious chances; they crowded forward to get even as much as an instant's glance through the half-opened door into the Executive chamber. They besieged the Representatives and Senators who had privilege of precedence; they

glared with envy at the Cabinet Ministers who, by right and usage, pushed through the throng and walked unquestioned through the doors. At that day the arrangement of the rooms compelled the President to pass through this corridor and the midst of this throng when he went to his meals at the other end of the Executive Mansion; and thus, once or twice a day, the waiting expectants would be rewarded by the chance of speaking a word, or handing a paper direct to the President himself—a chance which the more bold and persistent were not slow to improve. CHAP IV

At first, Lincoln bore it all with an admirable fortitude acquired in Western political campaigns. But two weeks of this experience on the trip from Springfield to Washington, and six weeks more of such beleaguering in the Executive office, began to tell on his nerves. What with the Sumter discussion, the rebel negotiation, the diplomatic correspondence, he was subjected to a mental strain and irritation that made him feel like a prisoner behind the Executive doors, and the audible and unending tramp of the applicants outside impressed him like an army of jailers. He said he felt like a man letting lodgings at one end of his house, while the other end was on fire. We can well imagine how it intensified the suspense with which he awaited the news from the fleet and the answer to his official communication to the Governor of South Carolina.

Amid such surroundings and labors the President received the news which now reached the whole country from Sumter. It came very gradually—first the military scurry about Charleston;

CHAP IV then Beauregard's demand for a surrender, followed by Anderson's prompt refusal; and finally, on the morning of Saturday, April 13, the newspapers of Washington, like those of every other city in the Union, North and South, were filled with the startling head-lines and thrilling details of the beginning and progress of an actual bombardment.

That day there was little change in the business routine of the Executive office. Mr. Lincoln was never liable to sudden excitement or sudden activity. Through all his life, and through all the unexpected and stirring events of the rebellion, his personal manner was one of steadiness of word and act. It was this quality which, in the earlier stages of the war, conveyed to many of his visitors the false impression of his indifference. His sagacity gave him a marked advantage over other men in enabling him to forecast probable events; and when they took place, his great caution restrained his comments and controlled his outward bearing. Oftentimes, when men came to him in the rage and transport of a first indignation over some untoward incident, they were surprised to find him quiet, even serene,—perhaps with a smile on his face and a jest on his lips,—engaged in routine work, and prone to talk of other and more commonplace matters. Of all things the exhibition of mock-heroism was foreign to his nature. Generally it happened that when others in this mood sought him, his own spirit had already been through the fiery trial of resentment—but giving no outward sign, except at times with lowered eyebrow, a slight nodding and shaking of the head, a muttering motion or hard compression of the lips, and,

rarely, an emphatic downward gesture with the clenched right hand. His judgment, like his perception, far outran the average mind. While others fumed and fretted at things that were, all his inner consciousness was abroad in the wide realm of possibilities, busily searching out the dim and difficult path towards things to be. His easy and natural attention to ordinary occupations afforded no indication of the double mental process which was habitual with him.

So, while the Sumter telegrams were on every tongue and revengeful indignation was in every heart, there was little variation in the business of the Executive Mansion on that eventful Saturday. The miscellaneous gathering was larger there, as it was larger at the Departments, the newspaper and telegraph offices, and the hotels. More leading men and officials called to learn or to impart news. The Cabinet, as by a common impulse, came together and deliberated. All talk, however, was brief, sententious, informal. The issue had not yet been reached. Sumter was still under fire. Nevertheless, the main question required no discussion, not even decision, scarcely an announcement. Jefferson Davis's order and Beauregard's guns had sufficiently defined the coming action of the Government. After this functionaries and people had but a single purpose, a single duty. Lincoln said but little beyond making inquiries about the current reports and criticizing the probability or accuracy of their details, and went on as usual receiving visitors, listening to suggestions, and signing routine papers throughout the day.

CHAP IV

One important exception deserves to be noticed. A committee from the Virginia Convention had an appointment for a formal audience with him that morning. The doubling and drifting attitude of the Old Dominion has already been described. The boasted conservatism of that convention was a sham. Its Unionism was vague and traditional; its complaint and contumacy were real and present. Day by day, with the loudest professions of loyalty on their lips, its majority was apologizing to its minority, and by labored argument against secession steadily convincing itself that treason was a necessity if not a duty. Recoiling from the fire of civil war, it yielded itself the more than half-willing cat's-paw of conspiracy. Bewailing the denial of shadowy claims of constitutional rights, it soon voluntarily put on the handcuffs of military despotism. A step in this road to political ruin was the appointment of a committee to visit Lincoln, requesting that he should define his policy, which request was only a covert and threatening demand for the evacuation of the Southern forts.

Committee,
Report
"Richmond
Enquirer,"
Apr 16, 1861

To this committee, consisting of William Ballard Preston, Alexander H. H. Stuart, and George W. Randolph, respectively a "conservative," a "Unionist," and a "secessionist," the President read his reply just written, on this morning of Saturday, April 13. The paper is temperate and dispassionate even to coldness. While the rebel guns were still raining bombs and red-hot shot on Sumter, he had already mapped out his course of procedure, based on the facts within his knowledge, but free from all trace of excitement or feeling of revenge. He told them he had distinctly defined

his policy in the inaugural address. It was still the plain and unmistakable chart of his intentions. It had been his plan to hold only the forts still occupied by the Government when he became President. But, he continued:

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If, as now appears to be true, in pursuit of a purpose to drive the United States authority from these places an unprovoked assault has been made upon Fort Sumter, I shall hold myself at liberty to repossess, if I can, like places which had been seized before the Government was devolved upon me. And in every event I shall, to the extent of my ability, repel force by force. In case it proves true that Fort Sumter has been assaulted, as is reported, I shall perhaps cause the United States mails to be withdrawn from all the States which claim to have seceded, believing that the commencement of actual war against the Government justifies and possibly demands this. I scarcely need to say that I consider the military posts and property situated within the States which claim to have seceded as yet belonging to the Government of the United States as much as they did before the supposed secession. Whatever else I may do for the purpose, I shall not attempt to collect the duties and imposts by any armed invasion of any part of the country; not meaning by this, however, that I may not land a force deemed necessary to relieve a fort upon a border of the country. From the fact that I have quoted a part of the inaugural address, it must not be inferred that I repudiate any other part, the whole of which I reaffirm, except so far as what I now say of the mails may be regarded as a modification.

Lincoln to
Committee,
Apr 13, 1861
MS

In this reply of the President we have his entire administrative policy regarding the rebellion; but it must be noted that it goes only to the extent of his actual information—it deals only with accomplished facts. The programme of the inaugural is already modified; the modification is slight but significant, and based not upon caprice or resent-

CHAP IV ment, but on necessity. According to fair interpretation of language, the programme of the inaugural was that he would execute the laws of the Union in all the States to the extent of his ability; hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the Government, and collect the duties and imposts. This he would do, however, only so far as it was necessary to protect and defend the Federal authority, not merely against domestic violence, but more especially against foreign influence or aggression. He would not invade, subjugate, menace, or harass local communities. All boundaries of the nation, seaboard or inland, he must of necessity hold and guard; he must occupy and control every custom-house or an efficient equivalent for it. The favorite theory was that duties might be collected on shipboard in insurgent ports, and thus avoid the friction of customs officers with the local populace. On inland boundaries other substitutes might perhaps be devised.

So, also, he explains in his reply, that the military posts he had intended to "hold, occupy, and possess" were this cordon of forts on the exterior boundary, all of which were still in Union hands when he was inaugurated. The interior places seized under Buchanan's Administration he would not immediately grasp at with the military hand; he would forego the exercise of Federal offices in disaffected districts in the interior; as a means of reassurance and reconciliation he would even send the malcontents their regular mails, if they would permit him. All this not as a surrender of a single Federal right, but to avoid violence, bloodshed, irritation; to create a feeling of safety; to induce

calm, reflection; to maintain peace; to restore fraternal sympathies and affections. "You can have no conflict," he had told them, "without being yourselves the aggressors." CHAP IV

But, in immediate connection with the tender of this benign policy, he had also warned them that it would be modified or changed if "current events and experience shall show a modification or change to be proper." That experience had now come. The rebels had rejected the tendered immunity, spurned the proffered peace, become the aggressors, opened the conflict in deliberate malice. He therefore modified his plan. He would repel force by force. He would withdraw the mails. He would recapture Sumter if it were taken, and, if he could, such other forts and places taken under his predecessor as were essential to the safety of the Union. So much was necessary for protection and precaution; less he could not do and fulfill his oath of office. Once more he told them that while he now felt himself by their act compelled to close and bolt the strong doors of Federal authority, he would yet refrain from even the appearance of punishment. Though he gave them to understand that he might attack the rebel batteries on Morris Island, or recapture Pensacola navy yard, or build a fort on Arlington Heights to protect Washington, yet he would "not attempt to collect the duties and imposts by any armed invasion of any part of the country."

His reply to the committee must be received with the same qualification which he attached to his inaugural. He still reserved the right to use his best discretion in every exigency, and to change his acts

CHAP IV under the inspiration of current events and experiences. The events of the day were his beacons; the necessities of the hour formed his chart. Throughout the tedious four-years' war he pretended to no prophecy and recorded no predictions. When souls of little faith and great fear came to him with pertinacious questioning, he might possibly tell them what he had done; he never told them what he intended to do. "My policy is to have no policy," was his pithy axiom oftentimes repeated; whence many illogically and most mistakenly inferred him to be without plans or expedients.

His promise to the Virginia committee must therefore be regarded as binding under the conditions of that day, namely: seven Cotton States leagu'd in rebellion; active war begun; seven thousand rebels in arms at Charleston; Sumter under fire with prospect of capitulation; Virginia, North Carolina, Arkansas, and other border States yet in the Union under loud protestations of loyalty and unceasing deprecation of civil war. Lincoln's reservation was well considered. One week from that day these conditions were transformed almost beyond comparison, compelling him to a widely different line of action. On the day they received their answer, the Virginia committee had an engagement to dine with Secretary Seward; but in view of the Sumter telegrams, they excused themselves and hurried back to Richmond.

By the next morning (Sunday, April 14) the news of the close of the bombardment and capitulation of Sumter was in Washington. In the forenoon, at the time Anderson and his garrison were evacuating the fort, Lincoln and his Cabinet, together with

sundry military officers, were at the Executive Mansion, giving final shape to the details of the action the Government had decided to take. A proclamation, drafted by himself, copied on the spot by his secretary, was concurred in by his Cabinet, signed, and sent to the State Department to be sealed, filed, and copied for publication in the next morning's newspapers. CHAP IV

The document bears date April 15 (Monday), but was made and signed on Sunday. This proclamation, by authority of the Act of 1795, called into service seventy-five thousand militia for three months, and convened Congress in extra session on the coming 4th of July. It commanded treasonable combinations to disperse within twenty days, and announced that the first object of this military force was to repossess the forts and places seized from the Union. This limit of time was made obligatory by the terms of the second section of the Act of 1795, under which the call was issued. It was necessary to convene Congress, and the law only authorized the use of the militia "until the expiration of thirty days after the commencement of the then next session of Congress."

Lincoln,
Proclama-
tion, April
15, 1861

In view of the subsequent gigantic expansion of the civil war, eleventh-hour critics continue to insist that a larger force should have been called at once. They forget that this was nearly five times the then existing regular army; that only very limited quantities of arms, equipments, and supplies were in the Northern arsenals; that the treasury was bankrupt; and that an insignificant eight million loan had not two weeks before been discounted nearly six per cent. by the New York bank-

CHAP IV ers, some bids ranging as low as eighty-five.¹ They forget that the shameful events of the past four months had elicited scarcely a spark of war feeling; that the loyal States had suffered the siege of Sumter and firing on the *Star of the West* with a dangerous indifference. They forget the doubt and dismay, the panic of commerce, the division of counsels, the attacks from within, the sneers from without—that faith seemed gone and patriotism dead.

Twenty-four hours later all this was measurably changed. But it was under such circumstances that Lincoln issued his call for seventy-five thousand men to serve three months. Even that number appeared a hazardous experiment—an immense army, a startling expenditure. As matters stood, it seemed enough to cope with the then visible forces of the rebellion, the President had no means of estimating the yet undeveloped military power of the insurgent States. The ordinary *indicia* to accurate administration were wanting. To a certain degree the Government was compelled to sail in a fog. But it is precisely in such emergencies that men like Lincoln are the inestimable possession of free nations. Hopeful, moderate, steadfast, he never for an instant forgot that he was the pilot, not the ship. He remembered what

¹ The following letter to President Lincoln, dated Treasury Department, April 2, 1861, is from MS

“MY DEAR SIR The bids for the \$8,000,000 loan exceed 33,000,000—the average advance from Mr Dix’s loan is from 3 to 4 per cent The highest bid — for only \$1000 though—is par, and near \$3,000,000 at 94, and I hardly think of taking any at lower rates. I am offered $\frac{1}{8}$ per cent premium on \$2,000,000 treasury notes All this shows decided improvement in finances and will gratify you. Yours, most truly, S. P. CHASE”

he had said in the inaugural: "If the Almighty Ruler of nations, with his eternal truth and justice, be on your side of the North, or on yours of the South, that truth and that justice will surely prevail by the judgment of this great tribunal of the American people." CHAP IV

He felt quite as confident that this popular justice would ultimately translate itself into armed might. But, holding this faith, he was not carried away by too sanguine impulses. While discussing the proclamation, some of his advisers made a disparaging contrast of Southern enterprise and endurance with the Northern. This indulgent self-deception he checked at the very outset. "We must not forget," he said, "that the people of the seceded States, like those of the loyal ones, are American citizens, with essentially the same characteristics and powers. Exceptional advantages on one side are counterbalanced by exceptional advantages on the other. We must make up our minds that man for man the soldier from the South will be a match for the soldier from the North and *vice versa*."

The action of the Government brought in its train countless new duties and details. Both at the departments and the Executive Mansion the Sunday was one of labor, not of rest—no end of plans to be discussed, messages to be sent, orders to be signed. The President's room was filled all day as by a general reception. Already the patriotic echoes were coming in from an excited country. Senators and Representatives yet in Washington felt authorized to pledge the support of their States. Of all such words of cheer, it is

CHAP IV safe to say none were personally so welcome and significant as the unreserved encouragement and adhesion of Senator Douglas of Illinois.

Having, through a friend, signified his desire for an interview, Douglas went to the Executive Mansion between seven and eight o'clock on this Sunday evening, April 14, and being privately received by the President, these two remarkable men sat in confidential interview, without a witness, nearly two hours. What a retrospect their singular careers must have forced into memory, if not into words, in this eventful meeting!—their contemporary beginnings in Illinois; the flat-boatman in Sangamon, the auctioneer's clerk in Scott County; their first meetings in country lawsuits; their encounters in the Legislature; their intellectual wrestlings on the stump; their simultaneous leadership of opposing parties in the State; their contest for the Senate, ending in Douglas's triumph; their rival nominations for the Presidency, resulting in Lincoln's success.

This, however, was not the end. Both men were in the conscious prime of intellect; both still in the undiminished vigor of physical manhood. Recognizing his defeat, Douglas was by no means conquered. If Lincoln was in the White House, he was in the Senate. Already in a Senate debate he had opened his trenches to undermine and wreck Lincoln's Administration. Already he had set his subtle sophistry to demonstrate that the revenue laws gave the Executive no authority for coercion. His usual skill in debate, however, failed him on this occasion; and allowing himself to be carried along in a singularly weak and illogical argument,

intended to force Mr. Lincoln and the Republican party into compromise to satisfy the border States and through their influence reclaim the Cotton States, he committed the serious blunder of declaring it unlawful and unwise to enforce the revenue laws in the insurrectionary ports or to recapture or hold their harbor defenses, except at Key West and Tortugas, which alone, he seemed to think, were "essentially national." He strongly deprecated the "reduction" and "subjugation" of the seceded States; and, declaring himself in favor of peace, said, with emphasis: "War is disunion. War is final, eternal separation." Perhaps intending merely to emphasize his attitude of mediation, he carelessly permitted himself to make a plea to tolerate accomplished secession.

Douglas,
Senate
Speech,
Mar 15, 1861
"Globe,"
pp 1458-
1462.

All this was very far short of the language of his letter accepting the Presidential nomination, that "the laws must be administered, the constituted authorities upheld, and all unlawful resistance to these things must be put down with firmness, impartiality, and fidelity." The adjournment of the Senate had terminated the debate without issue. Douglas still lingered in Washington, when suddenly the whole country was holding its breath at the report of the outrage in Charleston harbor.

Wedded too closely to the arts of the demagogue, Douglas nevertheless possessed the vision and power of the statesman in a high degree. Past failures had come to him not so much through lack of ability as through adherence to vicious methods. Estimating success above principle, he had adopted reckless expedients and

CHAP IV questionable combinations; and his speech of the 15th of March was only a new instance of his readiness to risk his consistency and his fame for a plausible but delusive move in party strategy.

Until this time, throughout all his minor heresies, he had kept himself true and unspotted on one vital point of political doctrine. The Union must be preserved, the laws enforced. In the face of temptation and defeat, in New Orleans and in Norfolk as boldly as in New York, he had declared that if Lincoln were elected he must be inaugurated and obeyed. This was popular sovereignty, genuine and undefiled. It was against this principle that the challenge had been hurled at Sumter, and the incident furnished Douglas the opportunity to retrieve the serious mistake of his recent Senate speech. That assault could no longer be disguised as lawful complaint or constitutional redress — it was the spring of a wild beast at the throat of the nation. It changed the issue from coercion to anarchy.¹ No single act of Douglas's life so strongly

¹ "The very existence of the people in this great valley depends upon maintaining inviolate and forever that great right secured by the Constitution, of freedom of trade, of transit, and of commerce, from the center of the continent to the ocean that surrounds it. The proposition now is to separate these United States into little petty confederacies. First, divide them into two, and then, when either party gets beaten at the next election, subdivide again, then, whenever one gets beaten again, another subdivision, and then, when you beat on Governor's election, the discomfited will rebel again, and so it will go on. And if this new system of resistance by the sword and bayonet to the results of the ballot-box shall prevail here in this country of ours, the history of the United States is already written in the history of Mexico. It is not a question of union or disunion. It is a question of order, of the stability of the Government, of the peace of communities. The whole social system is threatened with destruction and with disruption."— Douglas, Speech at Bellair, Ohio, April 22, 1861

marks his gift of leadership as that by which he accepted the new issue, and without a moment's hesitation came forward and placed himself beside Lincoln in defense of the Government—the first as well as the greatest “war Democrat.” An army with banners, not a marshal with a writ, was now the constitutional remedy. In view of the unprovoked military assault Douglas waived all party rivalry, and assured Lincoln, without questions or conditions, of his help to maintain the Union. CHAP IV

Lincoln's long-continued political contests with Douglas had always been kept within the bounds of social courtesy, if we except their Illinois joint debates, where the heat of discussion had once or twice carried them to the verge of a personal quarrel. Those passages, however, were forgotten by both. The present emergency was too grave for party feeling. Lincoln knew Douglas too well to underrate him. It was the President's method to apply the representative principle to problems of statesmanship. It did not need an instant's reflection to remember that next in value to the rank and file of the Republican party was the voluntary alliance of a great leader whom more than a million voters in the North had so lately followed unflinchingly to political defeat, and with whom that leader now offered to reenforce the defenders of the Union. If Lincoln had ever doubted the wisdom of his Sumter policy, which had kept open the road to this alliance, it was here vindicated.

On the following morning, side by side with Lincoln's proclamation, the whole country read the telegraphic announcement of the interview and the

CHAP IV authorized declaration that while Douglas was yet
“unalterably opposed to the Administration on all
its political issues, he was prepared to sustain the
President in the exercise of all his constitutional
functions to preserve the Union, and maintain the
Government, and defend the Federal capital.” If
there had been any possible uncertainty in the
premises before, this was sufficient to make the
whole North a unit in demanding the suppression
of the rebellion.

Press tele-
gram, April
14, 1861

Douglas nobly redeemed the promise he had given to Lincoln. There remained to him, unhappily, but a brief remnant of life; but from the day of this interview until the hour of his death, which occurred in his Chicago home on the 3d of June following, the voice of the great Democratic leader was ever earnest in his exhortations of fidelity to the Government. One of his latest public utterances was a speech of extraordinary power made on the 25th of April before the Legislature of Illinois, fitly closing the record of distinguished service which he had rendered his State and his nation.

CHAPTER V

THE NATIONAL UPRISING

THE guns of the Sumter bombardment woke the country from the political nightmare which had so long tormented and paralyzed it. The lion of the North was fully roused. Betrayed, insulted, outraged, the free States arose as with a cry of pain and vengeance. War sermons from pulpits; war speeches in every assemblage; tenders of troops; offers of money; military proclamations and orders in every newspaper; every city radiant with bunting; every village-green a mustering ground; war appropriations in every legislature and in every city or town council; war preparations in every public or private workshop; gun-casting in the great foundries; cartridge-making in the principal towns; camps and drills in the fields; parades, drums, flags, and bayonets in the streets; knitting, bandage-rolling, and lint-scraping in nearly every household. Before the lapse of forty-eight hours a Massachusetts regiment, armed and equipped, was on its way to Washington; within the space of a month the energy and intelligence of the country were almost completely turned from the industries of peace to the activities of war. The very children abandoned their old-time school-games, and played only at soldiering.

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Yates and
others to
Lincoln,
Apl 17, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
109

Fairbanks
to Cam-
eron, April
18, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
113

Kirkwood
to Cam-
eron, April
18, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
111

Morton to
Cameron,
Apl 23, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, pp
127, 128

Dennison
to Cam-
eron, April
22, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
125

From every governor of every free State to whom the President's proclamation and the requisition of the Secretary of War were addressed, most gratifying and loyal answers were promptly returned. They not only promised to obey the call and furnish the regiments asked for, but in their replies reflected the unanimity with which their people rallied to the defense of the assaulted Union. "The Governor's call was published on yesterday, and he has already received the tender of forty companies," said Illinois. "Our citizens throughout the State will respond with great enthusiasm to any call for sustaining the Government against the designs of the conspirators," said Vermont. "Ten days ago we had two parties in this State; to-day we have but one, and that one is for the Constitution and Union unconditionally," said Iowa. The war spirit rose above all anticipation, and the offer of volunteers went far beyond the call. "We have 6000 men in camp here and will have 8000 men by to-morrow night. . . I have also made a tender of six additional regiments to which I have received no answer. I shall put the six additional regiments in camp and under discipline, and hold them subject to the Government's order at least for a time." Such was the greeting from Indiana. A no less inspiring report was made by her sister State. "I find that I have already accepted and have in camp, or ready to march instantly to it, a larger force than the thirteen regiments named as the contingent of Ohio under the late requisition of the President. Indeed, without seriously repressing the ardor of the people, I can hardly stop short of twenty regiments."

The telegrams and letters here quoted are fair samples of the language and spirit with which the people of the North answered the President's official summons. Special mention deserves to be made of the untiring zeal and labors of the various executives of the free States in organizing and equipping troops, which earned for them the popular and honorable title of the "war governors."

If we would catch a glimpse of the dramatic forms in which popular fervor manifested itself in the President's own State, we need but read how the town of Quincy, Illinois, sent away her first company:

Yesterday, Sunday, Captain Prentiss left with his command for Springfield. At 12 m. all the pastors of the city, with their congregations, met the gallant captain and his loyal company in Washington Square, to give them a parting benediction. Six or seven thousand persons were present. A banner was presented, a hymn was sung, prayer was made, and the soldiers addressed by one of the clergymen and myself. We then marched with them to the depot, where the "Star-Spangled Banner" was sung, many thousands joining in the chorus. The scene altogether was the most solemn and impressive I have ever witnessed, and showed unmistakably how intensely the fires of patriotism are burning in the hearts of our people.

Browning
to Lincoln,
Apr 22, 1861
MS

In the Gulf States the revolutionary excitement rose to a similar height, but with contrary sentiment. All Union feeling and utterance vanished; and, overawed by a terrorism which now found its culmination, no one dared breathe a thought or scarcely entertain a hope for the old flag. The so-called Government of the Confederate States, convinced that it must at length confront actual war, made such haste as it could to put an army in

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Press Tele-
grams

the field, manifesting meanwhile an outward gayety at the prospect which its members could hardly have felt at heart. Montgomery telegrams stated that the Cabinet of the Confederate States read President Lincoln's proclamation "amid bursts of laughter." Alexander H. Stephens was reported as saying in an Atlanta speech that it would require seventy-five times 75,000 men to intimidate the South.

Walker to
the rebel
Governors,
Apl 16, 1861
W R
Series IV,
Vol I, pp
64, 65

Walker to
Brown,
Apl 17, 1861
W R
Series IV,
Vol I, pp
69, 70

Walker to
Rector,
April 17,
and Harris,
Apl 19, 1861
W R
Series IV,
Vol I, pp
70, 78

In addition to the 21,000 volunteers conditionally asked for on April 8, the rebel Secretary of War notified the Governors of the seven Cotton States that 32,000 more must be immediately got ready to take the field, and also asked that the forts and military posts within their limits be formally turned over to the control of the Montgomery authorities. Arkansas and Tennessee not yet being members of the Confederacy, permission was asked of their executives to plant batteries to blockade the Mississippi. Spare guns from the captured Charleston forts were sent south, and extraordinary efforts were made to concentrate an army at Pensacola for the reduction of Fort Pickens.

It was at this time (April 17) that Jefferson Davis issued a proclamation, inviting applications for letters of marque and reprisal, under which privateers were offered the opportunity to roam the high seas and ravage the commerce of the United States "under the seal of these Confederate States." The final hope of the rebel leaders was in cotton and free trade; and they believed that privateering was the easy stepping-stone to European intervention. The reasoning was plau-

sible, and the time not ill-chosen; but the proclamation found itself confronted by the prompt precautionary act of the United States Government. Two days later (April 19) President Lincoln issued a counter-proclamation, setting on foot a blockade of the rebel ports "in pursuance of the laws of the United States and of the laws of nations," and declaring that offenders under pretended letters of marque would be held amenable to the laws against piracy.

Thus sixteen States in the North and seven in the South stood opposed in the attitude and preparation of war. Between these two extremes of sentiment lay the debatable land of the border slave States, the greater portion of their citizens tormented with anxiety, with doubt, with their affections evenly balanced between the Union on one hand and slavery on the other; with ties of consanguinity permeating alike the North and the South; with the horrible realization that in the impending conflict they were between the upper and the nether millstones. To a certain extent the Governors of these States had hitherto professed to share the irresolution of their people. Openly, they still expostulated with the Cotton States against precipitate disunion, and urged instead that all the slave States should join in a convention and demand constitutional guarantees from the North. All this, however, was largely a mere pretext, because they very well knew that the extreme demands which they formulated would not be granted. Secretly, most of them were in the revolutionary plot; and when, by the assault on Sumter and President Lincoln's call for troops,

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they were compelled to take sides, all save two immediately gave their voice and help more or less actively in aid of the rebellion.

This course they began by refusing the regiments called for under the President's proclamation. "Kentucky will furnish no troops for the wicked purpose of subduing her sister Southern States," answered Governor Magoffin. "I can be no party to this wicked violation of the laws of the country, and to this war upon the liberties of a free people. You can get no troops from North Carolina." So ran the response from Governor Ellis. "The people of this commonwealth are freemen, not slaves, and will defend to the last extremity their honor, lives, and property against Northern mendacity and usurpation," was the reply from Governor Rector of Arkansas. "In such unholy crusade no gallant son of Tennessee will ever draw his sword," wrote Governor Harris. "Your requisition, in my judgment, is illegal, unconstitutional, and revolutionary in its object, inhuman and diabolical, and cannot be complied with," said Governor Jackson of Missouri.

Chief among the plotting border-State executives was Governor Letcher of Virginia. A former chapter has set forth the drift of that State towards rebellion under his leadership and instigation. The apparent Union majority in the Virginia Convention had somewhat restrained and baffled him and his coadjutors; but now they adroitly turned the fresh war excitement to their own advantage. Pretended Virginia Unionists had aided secession by clamoring for the unconditional evacuation of Sumter and other forts. Now that the

Magoffin to
Cameron,
Apl 15, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p 98

Ellis to
Cameron,
Apl 15, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p 99

Rector to
Cameron,
Apl 22, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
124

Harris to
Cameron,
Apl 20, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
118

Jackson to
Cameron,
Apl 17, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
106

Government and the North resolved to repel force by force, the ground necessarily sank from under them. They were overwhelmed with arguments and reproaches. One or two vainly essayed to stem the tide. But when Anderson's flag went down even their measured and conditional patriotism withered like Jonah's gourd. There was nothing more but brass-bands, meetings, war speeches, and torchlight processions. The Virginia commissioners reported Lincoln's answer to the convention without comment, and shrinking Unionists admitted that "if the President means subjugation of the South, Virginia has but one course to pursue." Governor Letcher did not need any stronger hint. With a dramatic affectation of incredulity and deliberation, to impress not only public opinion, but especially the wavering, dissolving majority of the convention, he waited a day before telegraphing his refusal to furnish troops—repeating the staple phrase about "subjugation." Then, in the face of his own avowed project to capture Fort Monroe, and with the assaulting guns of Beauregard still ringing in his ears, he replied to Cameron, "You have chosen to inaugurate civil war."

Letcher to
Cameron,
Apr 16, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol 1, p
103

Meanwhile, the fever heat of the populace communicated itself to the convention. An outside "States-Rights" assemblage of prominent Virginia politicians, which thronged into Richmond at this juncture, added its not inconsiderable tribute of pressure to the sweeping tide of treason. Under such impulses the convention went into secret session on Wednesday, April 17, and by a vote of 88 to 55 passed an ordinance of secession—or, as they softly phrased it, "An ordinance to repeal

CHAP V the ratification of the Constitution of the United States." On the same day Governor Letcher signed a proclamation announcing the dissolution of the Union and the existence of the rebel Provisional Government, and calling on all the armed regiments and companies of volunteers in the State to hold themselves in readiness for orders. Nor did his zeal confine itself to paper edicts. Under his instructions, doubtless matured and prepared in advance, seizures of the custom-house and government buildings in Richmond, of a private powder depot in Lynchburg, and of a number of steamers in the James River were hurriedly made, and military movements were begun to capture the United States arsenal at Harper's Ferry and the United States navy yard at Norfolk.

Of the two remaining border slave States, Delaware lay in such an isolated geographical position, and had withal so few slaves, that she was practically a part of the North, though still dominated in her local politics by pro-slavery influence.¹ Allied to the South rather by tradition than by present interest, her executive took refuge in a course of inaction. He replied by saying that the laws of Delaware gave him no authority to comply with the requisition of the Secretary of War, and that the organized volunteer companies of the State might at their option tender their services to the United States; and to this effect he issued his

Burton to
Cameron,
Apl 25, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I p
135

¹ It would seem from the following that Delaware was not altogether free from the taint of rebellion:

"I sent to New Castle a regiment with which I design seizing

the arms of four companies of secessionists now drilling at that place and Wilmington"—Patterson to Townsend, May 27, 1861. W R. Series III., Vol. I, p. 273.

official proclamation. The people took him at his word, and by their own action bore a patriotic and honorable part in the dangers and achievements of the Union army.

Of more immediate and vital importance, however, than that of any other border slave State, was the course of Maryland in this crisis. Between that State and Virginia lay the District of Columbia, originally ten miles square of Federal territory, containing the capital, the Government, and the public archives. In Baltimore, the chief city of Maryland, centered three of the great railroad routes by which loyal troops must approach Washington. It was a piece of exceptional good fortune that the Governor of Maryland was a friend of the Union, though hardly of that unflinching fearlessness needed in revolutionary emergencies. Whatever of hesitancy or vacillation he sometimes gave way to, resulted from a constitutional timidity rather than from a want of patriotism; and with brief exceptions to be more fully narrated, he was active and energetic in behalf of the Government. The population of the State was divided by a sharp antagonism, the Unionists having the larger numbers, the secessionists the greater persistence and daring. The city of Baltimore was so far corrupted by treasonable influences that Wigfall had established a successful recruiting office there for the rebel armies. As yet, disunion was working secretly; but this increased rather than diminished its effectiveness.

Like the other border-State executives, Governor Hicks had urged concession, compromise, peace, and joint border-State action to maintain the

CHAP V

Burton,
Proclamation, April
28, 1861
Moore,
"Rebellion
Record"
Vol I, Documents,
p 155

Wigfall to
Walker,
Mar. 17, 1861
W R
Series IV,
Vol I, p 23.

CHAP V

Hicks to
Lincoln,
Apl 17, 1861.
W R
Series III,
Vol I, pp
104, 105

Hicks to
Cameron,
Apl 17, 1861.
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
105

Union. In this, while his colleagues for the greater part used such talk to cover their meditated treachery, he was entirely sincere and patriotic. When Lincoln's call for troops reached him, he had no thought of refusing or resisting, but nevertheless hurried to Washington to deprecate civil war, and to ask that Maryland soldiers might not be sent to subjugate the South. Since the President had never entertained any purpose of "subjugation," Hicks was assured that the Maryland regiments should be employed to defend Maryland itself and the Federal District and capital. The Governor thereupon wrote to the Secretary of War: "The condition of affairs in this State at this time requires that arms shall be placed in the hands of true men and loyal to the United States Government alone," and requested arms "for arming four regiments of militia for the service of the United States and the Federal Government."

Other prominent Marylanders were already combining for demonstrative action to sustain the Government. A Congressional election in the State was near at hand. On the day of the President's proclamation Henry Winter Davis announced himself, in a Baltimore evening paper, as a candidate for Congress "upon the basis of the unconditional maintenance of the Union." But the official announcements and the exciting rumors with which the newspapers were filled had also stirred the disunion elements of Maryland into unwonted activity, and the pressure of sentiment hostile to Federal authority was quickly brought to bear on Governor Hicks, and developed the timid and hesitating qualities of

his character. He issued his proclamation April 18, containing, among many sage counsels in behalf of quiet and peace, two paragraphs doubtless meant by him for good, but which were well calculated to furnish the disunionists hope and encouragement:

CHAP V

I assure the people that no troops will be sent from Maryland, unless it may be for the defense of the national capital . . . The people of the State will in a short time have the opportunity afforded them, in a special election for Members of the Congress of the United States, to express their devotion to the Union, or their desire to see it broken up

Hicks,
Proclamation, April
18, 1861
Moore,
"Rebellion
Record,"
Vol I, Documents,
p 77

With this outline view of the political condition of the country at large, and especially of the border States of Virginia and Maryland, let us follow events at the Federal capital as recorded in the daily reports of General Scott to the President. On April 15, the day on which Lincoln issued his first call for 75,000 troops, the general says, in his report:

I have but little of special interest to report to-day, except that Colonel Smith, the commander of the Department of Washington, like myself, thinks our means of defense, with vigilance, are sufficient to hold this city till reenforcements arrive. I have telegraphed the commander at Harper's Ferry armory to say whether he can station, to advantage, for the defense of that establishment, additional recruits from Carlisle. The ground about the armory is very contracted and rocky

MS

General Scott's daily report, April 16, then proceeds:

For the President. He has no doubt been informally made acquainted with the reply of the officer commanding at Harper's Ferry, yesterday, viz that he wants no

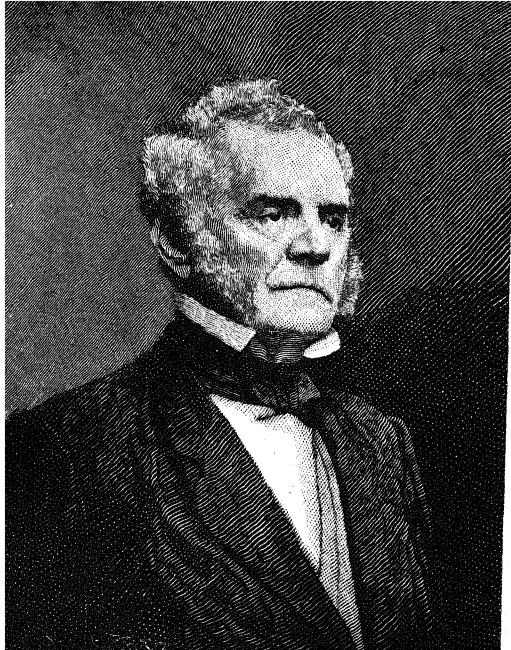
CHAP. V

réenforcement Nevertheless, as soon as the capital, the railroad to the Delaware at Wilmington, and Fort Monroe are made secure, my next object of attention will be the security of Harper's Ferry — proposing, in the mean time, or rather suggesting that the spare marines from the navy yards of Philadelphia, Brooklyn, and Boston be promptly sent to the Gosport navy yard This relief may serve, by compelling the secessionists to enlarge their preparations, to give us time to send a regiment of volunteers to that important point, in advance of any formidable attack upon it. With the authority of the Secretary of War we are engaged in mustering into the service eight additional companies of District volunteers. These, I think, place the capital a little ahead of impending dangers, and we will maintain, at least, that advantage, till by the arrival (in a week) of regulars and abundant volunteers our relative advantage will, I trust, be more than doubled

MS.

General Scott's daily report, April 17:

I repeat in writing some details which I had the honor to submit verbally to the President this forenoon Three or four regiments from Massachusetts (believed to be the first ready under the recent call) may be expected (three of them) to arrive here, and (one of them) at Fort Monroe, in two or three days. One of the three may, I think, be safely spared for Harper's Ferry, if the danger there (and I shall know to-morrow) shall seem imminent Captain Kingsbury, a most capable officer of the Ordnance Department, goes up this afternoon for that purpose, and to act a few days as superintendent; that is, till a new appointment (of a civilian) can be made. Two of the Massachusetts regiments are needed here, one of them I shall endeavor to intercept at Baltimore and direct it to Harper's Ferry As soon as one of the four reaches Fort Monroe, it perhaps may be safe to detach thence for the Gosport navy yard two or three companies of regulars to assist in the defense of that establishment. By to-morrow, or certainly the next day, we shall have Colonel Delafield here, an excellent engineer, to send to Gosport (with a letter from the Secretary of the Navy giving the



T. H. HICKS.

necessary authority) to devise, in conjunction with the naval commander there, a plan of defense Colonel Delafield will take instructions to call for the two or three companies of regulars as mentioned above Excepting the reenforcement of marines (suggested yesterday), and until the arrival of more volunteers, I know not what else can be done for the security of the Gosport navy yard To-night all the important avenues leading into Washington shall be well guarded

CHAP V

MS

The current demoralization of politics in the country had infected the army and the navy; and striking high as well as low, misdirected the zeal of Captain Adams, caused the dishonor of Major-General Twiggs, commanding the Department of Texas, and carried into rebellion Brigadier-General Joseph E. Johnston, the Quartermaster-General, and Samuel Cooper, the Adjutant-General of the Army. Among these victims of the States-Rights heresy was yet another man destined to become prominent in the rebellion, who undertook the maintenance of a principle and a policy, by him recognized and acknowledged to be false and monstrous. This was Robert E. Lee, a West Point graduate, an accomplished and experienced soldier, frequently recognized and promoted, the captor of John Brown at Harper's Ferry, and recently (March 16, 1861) made colonel of the First Cavalry by the Lincoln Administration; he was about two years older than President Lincoln, of fine presence, ripe judgment, and mature manhood. Lee was a favorite of Scott: under the call for troops the General-in-Chief at once selected him in his mind as the most capable and promising officer in the service to become the principal commander in the field; and of this intention he spoke

CHAP V

to many without reserve, having no misgiving as to his loyalty

Scott's confidence proved to be sadly misplaced. Repeated resignations and defections had very naturally engendered in the minds of the President and the Cabinet a distrust of every officer of Southern birth. Lincoln therefore requested F. P. Blair, senior, an intimate friend, to ascertain Lee's feelings and intentions. On the 18th of April, the third day after the President's call for troops, the day after Virginia's secret secession ordinance, and the day before the Baltimore riot, Mr. Blair invited Lee to an interview, informed him of the promotion and duties to which he was soon likely to be called, and thus unofficially offered him the command of the Union army. A flat contradiction exists as to the character of Lee's answer. Cameron, then Secretary of War, says he accepted the offer.¹ Montgomery Blair, then Postmaster-General, says he was undecided what he would do.² Both these gentlemen apparently derived their information from the elder Blair. On the other

¹ "General Lee called on a gentleman who had my entire confidence, and intimated that he would like to have the command of the army. He assured that gentleman, who was a man in the confidence of the Administration, of his entire loyalty, and his devotion to the interests of the Administration and of the country. I consulted with General Scott, and General Scott approved of placing him at the head of the army. The place was offered to him unofficially with my approbation, and with the approbation of General Scott. It was

accepted by him verbally, with the promise that he would go into Virginia and settle his business, and then come back to take command"—Hon. Simon Cameron, debate in the U. S. Senate, Feb. 19, 1868 ("Globe," p. 1270)

² "General Lee said to my father when he was sounded by him, at the request of President Lincoln, about taking command of our army against the rebellion, then hanging upon the decision of the Virginia Convention, 'Mr. Blair, I look upon secession as anarchy. If I owned the four millions of slaves at the South,

hand, Lee himself asserts that he declined the proposition, because, "though opposed to secession and deprecating war, I could take no part in an invasion of the Southern States."¹ He further explains his motive to have been an unwillingness to "take part against my native State," or to "raise my hand against my relatives, my children, my home." But in his interview with Blair he also affirmed that secession was anarchy; that if he owned the whole four million slaves of the South he would sacrifice them all for the Union; and he appears to have substantially repeated the sentiment written to his son a few weeks before, as follows:

Secession is nothing but revolution. The framers of our Constitution never exhausted so much labor, wisdom, and forbearance in its formation, and surrounded it with so many guards and securities, if it was intended to be broken by every member of the Confederacy at will. It was intended for "Perpetual Union," so expressed in the preamble, and for the establishment of a government, not a compact, which can only be dissolved by revolution, or the consent of all the people in convention as-

I would sacrifice them all to the Union, but how can I draw my sword upon Virginia, my native State?' He could not determine then, said he would consult with his friend General Scott, and went on the same day to Richmond, probably to arbitrate difficulties; and we see the result"—Hon. Montgomery Blair to Bryant, "National Intelligencer," August 9, 1866

¹ "I never intimated to any one that I desired the command of the United States army, nor did I ever have a conversation but with one gentleman, Mr

Francis Preston Blair, on the subject, which was at his invitation, and, as I understood, at the instance of President Lincoln. After listening to his remarks, I declined the offer he made me, to take command of the army that was to be brought into the field, stating, as candidly and as courteously as I could, that, though opposed to secession and deprecating war, I could take no part in an invasion of the Southern States"—Lee to Reverdy Johnson, February 25, 1868
J. W. Jones, "Life of Lee," p 141

CHAP V

Lee to his
Sister,
Apl 20, 1861
J W Jones,
"Life of
Lee," p 139.

CHAP V
Lee to his
Son, Jan
23, 1861
J W Jones,
"Life of
Lee," p 137

sembled It is idle to talk of secession. Anarchy would have been established, and not a government, by Washington, Hamilton, Jefferson, Madison, and the other patriots of the Revolution

Under a liberal interpretation, Lee's personal denial must be accepted, but the times, the circumstances, his qualifying declarations, and the strong statements of Cameron and Blair clearly reveal his hesitation and indecision. After his interview with Blair, Lee sought an interview with Scott, where the topics which filled men's hearts and occupied men's lips—Union, secession, Virginia, subjugation, duty and honor, defection and treason—were once more, we may be quite sure, thoroughly discussed. It is morally certain that Scott, also a Virginian, gave Lee a lesson in patriotism; but he caught no generous emulation from the voice and example of his great chief.

From Scott's presence Lee seems to have retired to his home and family at Arlington, to wrestle with the haunting shadows of duty. Pregnant news came to him, thick and fast. The secession of Virginia was verified in Washington that same evening. The next evening the Sixth Massachusetts marched in mingled pride and sorrow to the Capitol, having made an immortal record of service to their country. Here were new and important elements to influence his decision. Virginia seceded, Maryland in revolt, Washington threatened, Sumter lost, the border States defiant, the Confederate States arming, and uttering a half-official threat that the rebel flag should float over the Capitol by the 1st of May. If the walls of Arlington heard secret or open conferences with conspirators from

Washington, or conspirators from Richmond, no record of them has come to light; but Saturday, April 20, Lee wrote to his old commander:

CHAP V

GENERAL. Since my interview with you on the 18th instant, I have felt that I ought not longer to retain my commission in the army. I therefore tender my resignation, which I request you will recommend for acceptance. It would have been presented at once, but for the struggle it has cost me to separate myself from a service to which I have devoted all the best years of my life and all the ability I possessed. Save in defense of my native State, I never desire again to draw my sword.

Lee to Gen
Scott, April
20, 1861
Jones,
"Life of
Lee," pp
138, 139

Lee was at the time, in military phrase, "on leave of absence"; and without waiting to hear whether his resignation had been accepted, or even recommended for acceptance, as he himself had urged—without awaiting further orders, or permission, or discharge, or dismissal from service, on the 22d of April he was, by the Governor and the Convention of Virginia, appointed to, and on the 23d, in Richmond, publicly invested with, chief command of the Virginia State forces under the secret secession ordinance and Letcher's revolutionary proclamation, with all his military obligations to the United States intact and uncanceled; thus rendering himself guilty of desertion and treason.¹ No danger whatever menaced

¹ The Army Regulations of 1857, having the authority and force of law, contained the following provisions

"24 No officer will be considered out of service on the tender of his resignation, until it shall have been duly accepted by the proper authority

"28 In time of war, or with

an army in the field, resignations shall take effect within thirty days from the date of the order of acceptance"

For the offense thus defined by the Regulations of 1857, the Act of August 5, 1861, provided specific punishment, as follows

"SEC. 2 And be it further enacted, That any commissioned officer of the army, navy, or

CHAP V his "native State"—the President had positively disclaimed all intention to invade it. In the course of events we find him not alone defending his native State, to which he owed nothing, but seeking to destroy the Union, which had done everything for him; opposing war by promoting "revolution," and redressing grievances by endeavoring to establish "anarchy."

In instructive contrast with the weakness and defects of Lee, we have the honorable conduct and example of General Scott. He, too, was a Virginian who loved his native State. He, too, was opposed to secession and deprecated war. He, too, as officer, commander, diplomatist, and statesman, had learned from books and from men the principles and practice of loyalty, and perhaps better than any American exemplar was competent to interpret a soldier's oath, a soldier's duty, a soldier's honor. To avoid bloodshed he had declared his individual willingness to say to the seceded States, "Wayward sisters, depart in peace." But underneath pride of home, affection of kindred, and horror of war, on the solid substratum of consistency and character, lay his recognition of the principle of government, his real, not simulated, veneration for the Constitution, his acceptance of the binding force of law, his unswerving fidelity to

marine corps, who, having tendered his resignation, shall, prior to due notice of the acceptance of the same by the proper authority, and, without leave, quit his post or proper duties with the intent to remain permanently absent therefrom, shall be registered as a deserter, and punished as such."

If it be contended that Lee's offense was committed prior to this last statute, the answer is that his transgression was a much graver one, for he not only absented himself with intent to remain, but immediately entered into hostile service, an act punishable under the broad principles of general military law

his oath, his undying devotion to his flag. The conspirators had long hoped for the assistance of his great name and authority. They filled the air with rumors of his disaffection. Since its abrupt secession ordinance, the Virginian Convention had sat with closed doors; but through a responsible witness, we know that on the day on which Lee wrote his resignation (April 20) a committee of that convention called on General Scott to tempt him with the offer of the command of the Virginia forces. Senator Stephen A. Douglas, on his way home to arouse the great West in aid of Lincoln's proclamation, told the circumstance in graphic language to excited listeners:

I have been asked whether there is any truth in the rumor that General Scott was about to retire from the American army. It is almost profanity to ask that question. I saw him only last Saturday. He was at his desk, pen in hand, writing his orders for the defense and safety of the American capital. Walking down the street I met a distinguished gentleman, a member of the Virginia Convention, whom I knew personally, and had a few minutes' conversation with him. He told me that he had just had an interview with Lieutenant-General Scott, that he was chairman of the committee appointed by the Virginia Convention to wait upon General Scott and tender him the command of the forces of Virginia in this struggle. General Scott received him kindly, listened to him patiently, and said to him, "I have served my country under the flag of the Union for more than fifty years, and as long as God permits me to live I will defend that flag with my sword, even if my own native State assails it."

An eye-witness reports that the rebuke contained an additional feature of unusual impressiveness. When the spokesman of the committee, a man of venerable years and presence, had vaguely

CHAP V

E D
Townsend,
"Anecdotes
of the Civil
War," p 5

and cautiously so far unfolded the glittering lure of wealth and honor which Virginia held out that the general could catch the drift of the humiliating proposal, Scott held up his hand and said emphatically, "Friend Robertson, go no farther. It is best that we part here before you compel me to resent a mortal insult." That same afternoon Scott also telegraphed to Senator Crittenden, in response to an anxious inquiry based on the false rumors set afloat about him, "I have not changed. I have not thought of changing. Always a Union man." And in that unshaken mood of patriotism he lived and died, beloved of his country, and honored by the world.

J B Jones,
"Rebel War
Clerk's
Diary,"
Vol. I, pp
22-24

The Virginia secession ordinance, though secretly adopted on the 17th, became quickly known to the people of Richmond. It was immediately announced to the States-Rights Convention in session in another hall, and Governor Letcher, Senator Mason, ex-President Tyler, and ex-Governor Wise, from the convention, soon appeared there and glorified the event with speeches—the latter lamenting the "blindness which had prevented Virginia from seizing Washington before the Republican hordes got possession of it." Nevertheless, an effort was still made to prevent the news from going North. But that evening some of the unconditional Union delegates from western Virginia—then a part of the Old Dominion—deemed it prudent to shake the Richmond dust from their feet and secure their personal safety by prompt departure.

Delegates Carlisle and Dent were in Washington on the 18th, and in all probability informed Mr.

Seward and the President how irretrievably eastern Virginia was committed to rebellion, even if Governor Letcher's reply and proclamation had left any doubt on that point. Ominous rumors came from Harper's Ferry, and also a premature report of the burning of the railroad bridges beyond Baltimore. On that day, too, a detachment of 460 Pennsylvania volunteers, "almost entirely without arms,"¹ and a company of regulars from Minnesota had been hurriedly forwarded from Harrisburg to Washington. The unruly elements of Baltimore were already in commotion, the cars containing these men being in their passage through that city cheered by the crowd at some points and hooted and stoned at others, though no casualties occurred. Noting all these rumors and acts of hostility, Secretary Cameron telegraphed to Governor Hicks that "the President is informed that threats are made and measures taken by unlawful combinations of misguided citizens of Maryland to prevent by force the transit of United States troops across Maryland on their way, pursuant to orders, to the defense of this capital"—and strongly intimated to the Governor that the loyal authorities of Maryland ought to put them down.

The events of the week—the daily mustering of volunteers, the preparations for defense, the telegrams from the various State capitals—had

CHAP V

J D C to
Cameron,
Apl 18, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
113

J Thomas
Scharf,
"History of
Maryland,"
Vol III,
p 401

Cameron
to Hicks,
Apl 18, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 577

¹ These Pennsylvania Volunteers were composed of the Washington Artillery, The National Light Infantry, The Logan Guards, and The Allen Infantry. The call for them had been so peremptory that they were not yet organized into a regiment or supplied with arms, it being the intention to have this done at Washington—See Lossing, "The Civil War in America," Vol I, pp 404, 405.

CHAP V thrown Washington into a military fever. The social sympathies of the permanent population of Washington, and especially of its suburbs, Georgetown and Alexandria, were strongly Southern; but the personal interests of its inhabitants and property holders were necessarily bound up with the course and fate of the existing Government.

The Union manifestations were for the moment dominant, and volunteers came forward readily, even with some enthusiasm, to fill up the District quota. The city was also yet full of office-seekers from various States north and west. Cassius M. Clay of Kentucky, and Senator-elect James H. Lane of Kansas, both men of mark and courage, after an evening or two of flaming speech-making, organized them respectively into the "Clay Battalion" and the "Frontier Guards" These companies, of from thirty to sixty men each, were what might be called irregular volunteers—recruits from East and West, of all ranks in the great army of politics, who came forward to shoulder a musket without enlistment, commission, paymaster, or commissariat.

By this time the danger had become so threatening that every scrap and show of military force was welcome and really useful. The Government furnished them arms, and gave them in charge of Major (afterwards Major-General) David Hunter, who, on the evening of the 18th, stationed Clay's company in Willard's Hall, with orders to patrol the streets, and took Lane's Frontier Guards to the post of honor at the Executive Mansion. At dusk they filed into the famous East Room, clad in citizens' dress, but carrying very new, untarnished

muskets, and following Lane, brandishing a sword of irreproachable brightness. Here ammunition-boxes were opened and cartridges dealt out; and after spending the evening in an exceedingly rudimentary squad drill, under the light of the gorgeous gas chandeliers, they disposed themselves in picturesque bivouac on the brilliant-patterned velvet carpet—perhaps the most luxurious cantonment which American soldiers have ever enjoyed. Their motley composition, their anomalous surroundings, the extraordinary emergency, their mingled awkwardness and earnestness, rendered the scene a medley of bizarre contradictions,—a blending of masquerade and tragedy, of grim humor and realistic seriousness,—a combination of Don Quixote and Daniel Boone altogether impossible to describe. However, their special guardianship of the East Room lasted only for a night or two, until more suitable quarters could be extemporized; and for many days they lent an important moral influence in repressing and overawing the lurking treason still present in a considerable fraction among the Washington inhabitants.

CLIFF V

The graphic pen of Bayard Taylor, who happened to be in Washington on this same afternoon of April 18, has left us a sharp and strong historical picture of the city at the time:

Everywhere around me the flag of the Union was waving; troops were patrolling the streets, and yonder the watchful Marshal Lamon was galloping on the second horse he had tired out since morning. Everybody seemed to be wide awake, alert, and active. On reaching Willard's Hotel, the scene changed. The passages were so crammed that I had some difficulty in reaching the office. To my surprise, half the faces were Southern—espe-

CHAP V cially Virginian — and the conversation was carried on in whispers Presently I was hailed by several Northern friends, and heard their loud, outspoken expressions of attachment to the Union The whisperers near us became silent and listened attentively I was earnestly questioned as to whether the delay of the mails was occasioned by rails being torn up or bridges destroyed. Every one seemed to suspect that a treasonable demonstration had taken place in or near Baltimore The most exciting rumors were afloat Harper's Ferry was taken — Virginia had secretly seceded — Wise was marching on Washington — always winding up with the impatient question, "Why don't the troops come on?"

From Willard's Hotel Bayard Taylor went to the State Department, and afterwards to make a call on Lincoln. He continues :

I need not describe the President's personal appearance, for nearly everybody has seen him Honesty, firmness, and sound common-sense were the characteristics with which personally he impressed me. I was very glad to notice the tough, enduring vitality of his temperament — he needs it all He does not appear to be worn or ill, as I have heard, but, on the contrary, very fresh and vigorous. His demeanor was thoroughly calm and collected, and he spoke of the present crisis with that solemn, earnest composure which is the sign of a soul not easily perturbed I came away from his presence cheered and encouraged

CHAPTER VI

BALTIMORE

BALTIMORE, in 1861, was the great gateway of military approach from the Northern States to Washington. Lying at the head of the magnificent Chesapeake Bay, impossible to close by forts, it was also the common center and terminus of three principal railroad routes—respectively, from the Ohio River and the West; from Harrisburg and the lake region northward; from Philadelphia, covering New York and New England. CHAP VI

With the South in rebellion, Washington had but two established routes of transportation left her—the Potomac River, a fine water highway, but flowing through hostile territory, and liable to be quickly obstructed by land batteries at narrow points; and a single line of railway, a distance of forty miles to Baltimore, subject to the will or caprice of that great city of over 200,000 inhabitants, somewhat notorious for disorderly tendencies. It is therefore no marvel that the authorities, both State and Federal, watched the temper of her people with anxious solicitude. Two days after the President's call, Cameron asked the head of the great Pennsylvania road to take charge of

Cameron to
Thomson.
Apr 17, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p.
107

CHAP VI
Thomson to
Cameron,
Apr 17, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, pp
107, 108

the military transportation, who, going personally to Baltimore, reported the secession feeling very strong, and expressed fears lest the secession of Virginia might carry Maryland with her.

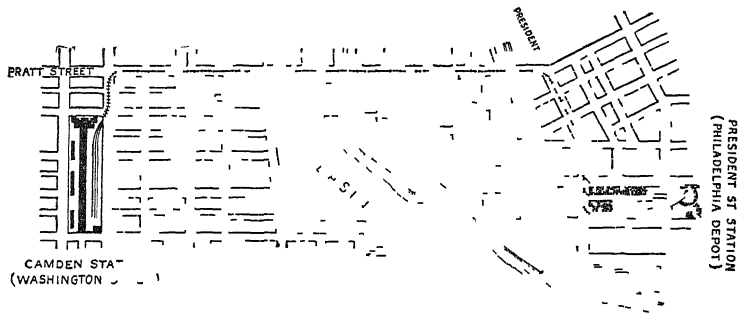
Governor Andrew of Massachusetts had since January filled up with serviceable men the organized active militia regiments of that State, supplied them with perfect equipments and improved arms, and held them ready for call in view of possible emergencies. The President's proclamation was published in the Boston morning papers on Monday, April 15; on Tuesday forenoon the Sixth Massachusetts began mustering on Boston Common; on Wednesday evening, April 17, the completed regiment, with new rifles and filled cartridge-boxes, with benedictions on the regimental flag, and amid the silent blessings of the multitude, embarked in railroad cars. As they sped southward they witnessed the manifestation of the popular uprising in the New England towns, the literally packed streets and the demonstrations of honor in New York, and the crowning enthusiasm in Philadelphia, where they arrived on the evening of the 18th. Here Colonel Edward F. Jones, commanding the regiment, found Major-General Robert Patterson organizing the Pennsylvania militia, and received from the military and railroad officers warning of apprehended danger in Baltimore; but, in obedience to what he deemed imperative orders from his Governor, he determined to go forward—only delaying his progress that his wearied men might bivouac until after midnight, which arrangement would also permit them to pass through Baltimore by day.

Before daylight the men were roused, and the train started from Philadelphia. Reaching the Susquehanna River, it overtook a corps of Pennsylvania volunteers—Small's brigade, over a thousand men—which had started for Washington without uniforms or arms. This corps was also attached to the train which then numbered more than thirty cars. The railroad officials, to guard against accident or treachery, sent a pilot engine ahead, and had arranged an interchange of cipher messages with their Baltimore office, from which, at succeeding stations, as the train approached the city, repeated assurances were received that all was quiet, and no trouble need be feared. Nevertheless, with due soldierly caution, Colonel Jones made deliberate preparation; his command loaded and capped their rifles, while he went personally through the cars and issued the following order:

The regiment will march through Baltimore in columns of sections, arms at will. You will undoubtedly be insulted, abused, and perhaps assaulted, to which you must pay no attention whatever, but march with your faces square to the front, and pay no attention to the mob, even if they throw stones, bricks, or other missiles, but if you are fired upon, and any one of you is hit, your officers will order you to fire. Do not fire into any promiscuous crowds, but select any man whom you may see aiming at you, and be sure you drop him.

This order clearly contemplated a march through the city by the regiment in a body, which by some misunderstanding or change of plan on the part of the railroad managers was not carried out.

The train arrived at the Philadelphia or President street station, and the troops were again to take cars for Washington at the Washington or Camden



FROM THE PHILADELPHIA TO THE CAMDEN STATION

station. The two depots were perhaps a mile apart, the track connecting them running for the greater distance straight westward along Pratt street, excepting a short bend to the north at the beginning, and a corresponding short bend to the south near the end. It seems at the last moment to have been decided to follow the ordinary method of hauling the loaded cars from the Philadelphia depot to the Washington depot with horses, and to make the troops change cars at the latter station. Accordingly, it was at this point that danger was apprehended, and protection of the police had been asked. The Baltimore authorities assert that, though they only received about half an hour's notice, they responded promptly, and the mayor, chief of police, and a considerable force were on hand and rendered effective service in protecting the transfer of the troops at the Washington station.

When, therefore, the train first halted at the Philadelphia or President street station on its arrival, Colonel Jones, instead of receiving word to form his regiment for a march, as he expected, was astonished to find the first few cars drawn rapidly and separately through the streets by horses, which



JOHN A. ANDREW.

had been attached before he was well aware of what was going on. His own and seven or eight succeeding cars thus made the transit safely, and arriving at the Washington station the troops began to change cars. Here an immense crowd was gathered, and demonstrations of hostility immediately began. Says a newspaper account: "The scene, while the troops were changing cars, was indescribably fearful. Taunts clothed in the most outrageous language were hurled at them by the panting crowd, who, almost breathless with running, pressed up to the car windows, presenting knives and revolvers, and cursed up into the faces of the soldiers. The police were thrown in between the cars, and forming a barrier, the troops changed cars, many of them cocking their muskets as they stepped on the platform."

CHAP VI

"Baltimore
Sun," April
20, 1861

The peaceful passage of the cars through the streets was not, however, of long duration. When the ninth¹ car, containing the seventh company, issued from the Philadelphia depot, it was greeted with riotous insults by the crowd which had, during the unavoidable delay, rapidly gathered; and while passing over a portion of Pratt street, where certain street repairs were going on, the mob gathered up a pile of loose paving-stones which they hurled at the car, smashing in the windows and blinds, and adding to this method of assault an occasional shot from a pistol or a gun. A trustworthy account states: "The men were very anxious to fire on their assailants, but Major Watson forbade them. . . One or two soldiers were wounded by paving-stones and bricks, and at length one man's

¹ There are discrepancies in the different accounts.

CHAP VI thumb was shot, when, holding up the wounded hand to the major, he asked leave to fire in return. Orders were then given to lie on the bottom of the car and load, and, rising, to fire from the windows at will. These orders were promptly obeyed."

J W Han-
son, "The
Sixth Mas-
sachusetts
Regiment,"
p 25

Three times during the passage obstructions were laid on the track, requiring the car to be stopped till they could be removed. Under such repeated attacks this car reached the Washington depot. It had been a fight at long range, and in the shelter of the car no death had resulted to the troops. It was apparently at this juncture that the various authorities at the Washington depot became aware of the serious character of the riot. Colonel Jones was informed by the railroad superintendent that cars could no longer be hauled across the city, and he hurriedly wrote an order to the missing companies to join him by a forced march.

Ibid, p 26

Mayor George W. Brown started immediately on foot for the scene of the disturbance. Marshal George P. Kane, Chief of Police, devolved his command on a subordinate, and, collecting as many policemen as could be spared, also hastened eastward to join the mayor.

Exciting scenes were meanwhile enacted about the Philadelphia depot. The car of the seventh company having escaped their clutches, the rioters bethought themselves of permanently breaking communication between the two stations. They seized the laborers' picks and shovels used in the repairs of Pratt street and tried to pry up the rails, but without success. Then they piled loose stones

on the track, and at another place a load of sand. CHAP VI
Elsewhere they laid on the rails a number of heavy anchors dragged from a neighboring wharf. At still another place, they partly tore up a bridge. While the remaining four companies were waiting their turn to proceed, two of the railroad men informed them of the condition of affairs. Colonel Jones's order had failed to reach them; but the officers consulted together, and placing Captain Albert S. Follansbee in command, resolved to go forward. The companies filed out of their cars, formed deliberately on the sidewalk, and, calling a policeman to lead the way, started on the perilous march.

Almost at the outset they encountered a hastily improvised procession, following a secession flag and marching directly towards them, which refused to yield the way. In an instant there were crowding, hustling, confusion, groans, hooting, cries of "nigger thieves," and a struggle for the capture and possession of the rebel flag. The soldiers pushed doggedly ahead, and, thinking to pass the crowd, broke into a double-quick. This encouraged the rioters, who took it as a sign of fear. They redoubled their yells, called them cowards, and followed them with showers of clubs and stones. After two or three blocks of such progress the soldiers reached the torn-up bridge. "We had to play 'Scotch-hop' to get over it," says Captain Follansbee. "As soon as we had crossed the bridge, they commenced to fire upon us from the street and houses. I ordered the men to protect themselves, and then we returned their fire and laid a great many of them away." At this point

CHAP VI Mayor Brown met the advancing column. He writes:

An attack on them had begun, and the noise and excitement were great. I ran at once to the head of the column, some persons in the crowd shouting as I approached, "Here comes the mayor." I shook hands with the officer in command, saying, as I did so, "I am the mayor of Baltimore." I then placed myself by his side and marched with him as far as the head of Light street wharf, doing what I could by my presence and personal efforts to allay the tumult. The mob grew bolder and the attack became more violent. Various persons were killed and wounded on both sides. The troops had some time previously begun to fire in self-defense; and the firing, as the attack increased in violence, became more general.

Mayor
Brown's
Message,
July 11, 1861
W. R. Vol
II, p. 16

Captain Follansbee confirms this statement: "The mayor of the city met us almost half-way. He said there would be no trouble, and that we could get through, and kept with me for about a hundred yards; but the stones and balls whistled too near his head, and he left. . . That was the last I saw of him."¹

Hanson,
"The Sixth
Massachu-
setts Regi-
ment," p. 41

The mayor's separation from the troops was probably caused by an important diversion which occurred at this point in their progress. Marshal Kane, hurrying to the rescue at the head of about fifty policemen, met the struggling and fighting column of soldiers, with Captain Follansbee and Mayor Brown at their head; and, taking in the situation and remedy at a glance, executed a movement which was evidently the turning-point in the

¹In his volume, "Baltimore and the 19th of April, 1861," published in 1887, ex-Mayor Brown says on page 51 "The statement in Colonel Jones's report that I seized a musket and killed one of the rioters is entirely incorrect."

affray. By his order the line of policemen opened their ranks, and having allowed the column of troops to pass through, immediately closed again behind them, forming a firm line across the street. The marshal directed his men "to draw their revolvers and shoot down any man who dared to break through their line." This opposed an effectual barrier to the farther advance of this portion of the mob, which the police continued to hold in check, while the column of troops pursued its way to the Washington depot with only one or two further attacks. Arrived there, the four companies were hurried into the cars. The trouble, however, was not yet over.

The immense crowd gathered here manifested a dangerous turbulence. Its savage temper had only grown during the delay, the receipt of the news and rumors, and the arrival of the harried rear-guard. Still more threatening, the crowd repeatedly rushed ahead of the standing train and piled heavy stones, telegraph-poles, and other objects on the track, which the police as often succeeded in removing. Colonel Jones and his officers had their men well under control; they kept them quiet, the blinds of the cars well drawn down, and thus prevented unnecessary challenge or irritation to the mob.

All being at length ready, the train moved slowly and cautiously away; but as it did so, a discharge of muskets blazed from a window of the rear car, and a prominent citizen of Baltimore fell dying to the ground. The bystanders declared the act was without provocation; the soldiers and their officers maintained that it was in response to a volley of

CHAP VI

Report of
Marshal
Kane,
May 3, 1861
"Globe,"
July 18, 1861,
p 200

CHAP VI

stones or a shot. The casualties were never accurately ascertained or published. The soldiers lost four men killed and thirty-six wounded; the citizens perhaps two or three times that number. The single death which occurred as the train moved out, however, created more subsequent excitement in Baltimore than the scores who were slain and wounded in the mêlée on Pratt street.

Marshal Kane, having stopped the progress of the mob along Pratt street, had marched his policemen back to the Washington depot, where he learned that the train was gone; and, supposing that all danger was at last over, dismissed his force and was proceeding to his office, when he was informed that there were yet other troops at the Philadelphia depot. These proved to be the regimental band of the Massachusetts men, and Small's Pennsylvania brigade, all unarmed. It is probable that the great length of the train had compelled the halting, at a considerable distance from the depot, of the cars in which they were, and that they had remained in ignorance of the occurrences described.

When Marshal Kane arrived there, he found that the members of the band were already driven from their car and dispersed, and that the Pennsylvania men were just coming into the depot. "Some of these troops," he says, "commenced jumping from the train just as I got there, and were immediately set upon by an infuriated populace. I fought hard for their protection; at first almost alone, but soon had the assistance of a part of my force who hurried from the neighboring beats." Meanwhile the railroad officials at Philadelphia were hastily consulted by telegraph, and orders

Report of
Marshal
Kane,
May 3, 1861
"Globe,"
July 18, 1861,
p 201

soon came to have the remainder of the train and troops withdrawn from Baltimore without unloading, and carried back on the railroad towards Philadelphia as far as the Susquehanna River. The dispersed members of the band and other stragglers for the most part found sympathy, shelter, and concealment among humane Baltimoreans not engaged in the riot, until rescued and sent home by the police.¹

All this rioting occurred in the forenoon between ten and twelve o'clock. During the remainder of the day mob feeling, if not mob violence, controlled the city. The military companies were ordered out, and a mass meeting was called for four o'clock in Monument Square. At the appointed time a huge gathering assembled: the speakers, for the greater part, delivered strong anti-coercion speeches; instead of the national banner, a flag was displayed bearing the arms of Maryland. In substance, the occasion was a great secession meeting. Mayor Brown and Governor Hicks were called to the rostrum and made professions and promises in the prevailing tone, the Governor declaring that he bowed in submission to the people. "I am a Marylander," said he, "and I love my State, and I love the Union; but I will suffer my right arm to be torn from my body before I will raise it to strike a sister State."² How completely the city

¹In response to a request from Governor Andrew of Massachusetts, the mayor and authorities of Baltimore took immediate steps to care for the wounded and to pay respect to the dead of the Massachusetts regiment, a courtesy which was properly ac-

knowledged. One year later the Legislature of Maryland appropriated \$7000 for the families of Massachusetts soldiers killed or disabled by wounds in the riot.

²"Baltimore Sun," April 20, 1861. The "Baltimore American" of the same date gave the

CHAP VI was in revolt is told by Governor Hicks in a dispatch sent on the following day to Secretary Cameron :

Up to yesterday there appeared promise, but the outbreak came; the turbulent passions of the riotous element prevailed, fear for safety became reality, what they had endeavored to conceal, but what was known to us, was no longer concealed, but made manifest; the rebellious element had the control of things. We were arranging and organizing forces to protect the city and preserve order, but want of organization and of arms prevented success. They had arms, they had the principal part of the organized military forces with them, and for us to have made the effort, under the circumstances, would have had the effect to aid the disorderly element. They took possession of the armories, have the arms and ammunition, and I therefore think it prudent to decline (for the present) responding affirmatively to the requisition made by President Lincoln for four regiments of infantry.

Hicks to
Cameron,
Apr 20, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 581

This temporary bending before the storm of riot by the powerless authorities might have been pardoned under the emergency had they not proceeded to stultify their courageous conduct of the forenoon by an act, if not of treason, at least of cowardice. At midnight Mayor Brown, Marshal Kane, and the Board of Police, and, as these assert, also Governor Hicks, consulted together, and deliberately ordered the destruction of the railroad bridges between Baltimore and both Harrisburg

following slightly different version of the Governor's remarks. It is probable that both reports are inaccurate

"The Union was now apparently broken, but he trusted that its reconstruction may yet be brought about (cries of 'Never')

Resuming, he said 'But if otherwise, I bow in submission to the mandate of the people. If submit we must, in God's name let us submit in peace, for I would rather this right arm should be separated from my body than raise it against a brother'"

and Philadelphia.¹ Two strong parties of men were sent out, one of them headed by Marshal Kane, who before daylight burned the bridges at Melvale, Relay House, and Cockeysville on the Harrisburg road, and over the Bush and Gunpowder rivers and Harris Creek on the Philadelphia road. Governor Hicks soon after totally denied his consent to, or complicity in, the business, while the others insist that he was equally responsible with themselves. The fact remained that the authorities had, by an act of war, completely cut off the national capital from railroad communication with the North.

CHAP VI

Mayor
Brown to
the Mary-
land Legis-
lature, May
10, 1861
W R Vol
II, pp 12-
15

The authors of this destruction attempt to justify their conduct by the excuse that they were informed of the approach of another large body of Northern troops, and they feared that under the prevailing excitement the soldiers would wreak vengeance on the city for that day's attack on the Sixth Massachusetts. They, however, cite nothing in the form of such a threat reaching them before their order, except a telegram from the railroad officer at Philadelphia, "that it was impossible to prevent these troops from going through Baltimore; the Union men must be aroused to resist the mob."

Angry threats did soon come from the North; but not till after the bridge-burning, and largely excited by that act itself. It is impossible to resist the conviction that Mayor Brown and Marshal Kane were secessionists at heart; and while they

¹ Mayor Brown to the General the Board of Police, May 3, 1861, Assembly of Maryland W R Ibid., p 10 Also Brown, "Bal- Vol. II, p 13 Report of Marshal tumele and the 19th of April, Kane, Ibid, p 14, and Report of 1861," p. 58.

CHAP VI. were too sagacious to have prompted or encouraged the mob of April 19, they were quite ready to join in any sweeping popular movement to precipitate Maryland into rebellion, even if they were not actually then in a secret conspiracy to that end. While on his way to burn the bridges, Marshal Kane sent a telegram to a kindred spirit, which leaves no doubt of his then treasonable intent:

Thank you for your offer. Bring your men in by the first train, and we will arrange with the railroad afterwards Streets red with Maryland blood Send expresses over the mountains and valleys of Maryland and Virginia for the riflemen to come without delay. Fresh hordes will be down on us to-morrow (the 20th). We will fight them, and whip them or die ¹

General Scott's report and Cameron's dispatch of the 18th, quoted in the last chapter, show the already serious apprehensions of the Administration about the condition of Maryland, and particularly Baltimore. The rumors and news received on the 19th made the outlook still worse. It was definitely ascertained in the forenoon that Harper's Ferry had been so threatened by the Virginia rebels as to induce Lieutenant Roger Jones to burn the arsenal and armory and retreat into Maryland with his little handful of soldiers. Other news convinced the authorities that there was no reasonable prospect of saving the Gosport navy yard at Norfolk, Virginia; and that night the war steamer *Pawnee* was started on her mission, with discretionary authority to destroy that immense establishment

¹George P Kane to Bradley T Johnson, April 19, 1861 Marshal Kane, in his official report of May 3, 1861, admits the language of the dispatch, and offers no explanation of it but undue excitement

with its millions' worth of Government property. CHAP V. 1
Shortly after noon there came, both by telegraph and messenger, the dreaded dispatch from Governor Hicks and Mayor Brown:

A collision between the citizens and the Northern troops has taken place in Baltimore, and the excitement is fearful. Send no more troops here. We will endeavor to prevent all bloodshed. A public meeting of citizens has been called, and the troops of the State and the city have been called out to preserve the peace. They will be enough.

Carefully scrutinized, this dispatch was found to be, like an ancient oracle, capable of a twofold meaning. The President and part of the Cabinet supposed Hicks meant to say he needed no troops to put down the riot. On the other hand, General Scott and Mr. Seward, usually so hopeful, thought they could read between the lines that it was desired no more troops should be passed through Baltimore. The arrival of the assaulted Sixth Massachusetts about five o'clock added nothing to the current information except to demonstrate the seriousness of the day's occurrences. A crowd of five thousand people received the regiment at the depot with enthusiastic cheers of welcome, and escorted its march to the rotunda of the Capitol, whence it went to quarters in the Senate Chamber.

Special messengers came that evening from Governor Hicks to say that the Pikesville arsenal, eight miles from Baltimore, having been abandoned by the army officer in charge, the Governor had caused it to be occupied and protected for the United States. The President showed them the dispatch; but they

CHAP VI could give no explanation beyond reiterating the Governor's and their own loyalty.

Moore,
"Rebellion
Record"
Vol I, Doc-
uments,
p 79

Hicks,
Brown, and
Howard to
Garrett,
Apl 19, 1861
Garrett,
reply, April
19, 1861
Felton to
Hicks and
Brown,
Apl 19, 1861

Thomas to
Felton,
Apl 19, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 578

The true interpretation soon came, though in a roundabout way. The riot had thrown all the railroad companies into a panic. Hicks and Brown had advised, and the Board of Police ordered, all troops en route to be sent back towards Pennsylvania. To its compliance with this advice and order the Baltimore and Ohio road added a refusal to undertake any further transportation; and to this refusal the Philadelphia and Wilmington road had also given its assent. Amid the excitement and confusion it was some time before the real condition of affairs became known to the authorities at Washington. The question was pretty fully debated by the President, Cabinet, and General Scott, and a sharp dispatch in cipher sent back to Philadelphia: "Governor Hicks has neither right nor authority to stop troops coming to Washington. Send them on, prepared to fight their way through, if necessary."

This decision having been reached, the President and various officials sought their rest for the night, not by any means assured of a tranquil sleep. The possible contingencies of the hour are briefly expressed in a memorandum made on the night of the Baltimore riot by an occupant of the Executive Mansion:

We are expecting more troops here by way of Baltimore, but are also fearful that the secessionists may at any hour cut the telegraph wires, tear up the railroad track, or burn the bridges, and thus prevent their reaching us and cut off all communication. We have rumors that 1500 men are under arms at Alexandria, seven miles below here, supposed to have hostile designs against this city;

and an additional report that a vessel was late this evening seen landing men on the Maryland side of the river. All these things indicate that if we are to be attacked at all soon, it will happen to-night. On the other hand, we have some four to five thousand men under arms in the city, and a very vigilant watch out in all the probable directions of approach. The public buildings are strongly guarded; the Secretary of War will remain all night in his Department, and General Scott is within convenient reach.

CHAP VI.

J G N,
Personal
Memoran-
da MS

Soon after midnight a special train brought a committee from Baltimore. The authorities of that unhappy city were, first by the riot, and afterwards by the public meeting and the popular demonstrations in the streets, worked into a high state of excitement. About an hour before their determination and order to burn the bridges, Mayor Brown wrote a request to the President to stop the transit of troops, saying, "It is my solemn duty to inform you that it is not possible for more soldiers to pass through Baltimore, unless they fight their way at every step." Being by this time in one of his yielding moods, Governor Hicks concurred in the request by a written note. It was too late to see the President when the committee bearing the letter arrived; they therefore applied to Cameron at the War Department, who refused flatly to entertain their request, turning over on his sofa for another nap. From the chief clerk they learned that no troops were then actually on the way, and with this bit of relief they contented themselves till daylight.

Brown to
Lincoln,
Apr 19, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 12
Hicks to
Lincoln,
Apr 19, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 12

Next morning (April 20) the President had just finished his breakfast when General Scott's carriage stopped under the White House portico.

CHAP VI The general was suffering from gout, which made it painful for him to mount to the Executive chamber; and to save him this exertion, Lincoln went down to exchange a word with him at the door. At the foot of the staircase the President encountered the Baltimore committee, read their brief letter, and took them at once to General Scott's carriage, where they eloquently portrayed the danger—nay, the impossibility—of bringing soldiers through Baltimore; whereupon the general, looking solely to the urgency of getting troops to the capital, and perceiving no advantage in fighting a battle in that city, suggested promptly, "March them around"—the change from the dispatch sent the previous evening to Philadelphia being purely one of expediency under an alleged state of facts. The committee returned with the President to his office, where he wrote a reply to Governor Hicks's and Mayor Brown's letters:

Lincoln to
Hicks and
Brown,
Apl 20, 1861

For the future troops must be brought here, but I make no point of bringing them through Baltimore. Without any military knowledge myself, of course I must leave details to General Scott. He hastily said this morning, in the presence of these gentlemen, "March them around Baltimore, and not through it." I sincerely hope the general, on fuller reflection, will consider this practical and proper, and that you will not object to it. By this a collision of the people of Baltimore with the troops will be avoided, unless they go out of the way to seek it.

Hicks to
Brown,
Apl 20, 1861
W. R. Vol
II, p 581

This arrangement was, on being communicated to the Governor, accepted by him. He wrote: "I hoped they would send no more troops through Maryland; but as we have no right to demand that, I am glad no more are to be sent through Baltimore."

"Give an inch, he'll take an ell." The proverb is especially applicable in times of revolution, when men act under impulse, and not on judgment. President Lincoln did not lose sight of this human weakness while dealing with the Baltimore committee. When about to write his letter for them, he said half playfully, "If I grant you this concession, that no troops shall pass through the city, you will be back here to-morrow demanding that none shall be marched around it." They protested to the contrary; but the President's words were literally verified.

CHAP VI

J G N,
Personal
Memoran-
da MS

When the committee returned to Baltimore, the alleged popular dread of invasion had already changed to extensive preparation for meditated but not yet avowed insurrection. So far from being thankful for their success in changing the march of Union troops, the incensed secessionists upbraided the committee for consenting to allow them to pollute the soil of Maryland. Two members of the Legislature were sent back to the President to formulate new demands. This, with the Governor's withdrawal of his offer to furnish the four regiments, already cited, and the scattering sensational telegrams received, induced Lincoln, on the afternoon of Saturday, April 20, to telegraph to Governor Hicks and Mayor Brown to come by special train, as he desired to consult them "relative to preserving the peace of Maryland." The Governor had gone to Annapolis, and after the interchange of various messages, the mayor himself was asked to come.

Scharf,
"History
of Mary-
land," Vol
III, pp 415,
416

So soon as the Baltimore route was closed by the riot of the 19th of April, the railroad authorities

CHAP VI at Philadelphia had with commendable energy devised and prepared a new route — by rail to Perry-



MAP OF THE APPROACHES TO WASHINGTON

ville on the Susquehanna; thence by water on Chesapeake Bay to Annapolis; thence by railroad, or, if that were destroyed, common wagon-roads to Washington.¹ This they suggested to General

¹ Great credit is due to S M Baltimore Railroad, the same Felton, then president of the who ordered the precautions at Philadelphia, Wilmington, and the time of Mr. Lincoln's night

Scott on the 20th, and he ordered it adopted the same day. CHAP VI

That forenoon, Senator David Wilmot, making his way northward from Washington as best he could, wrote back from Baltimore to the General-in-Chief, confirming the rumor that some of the bridges of the Philadelphia road had been destroyed, the telegraph interrupted, and rapid communication with the North cut off; and added, "Troops coming on your road [from Harrisburg to Baltimore] could leave it about three miles from Baltimore, and by a march of five miles reach the Washington road some two and a half miles from the city." It was with some such idea that General Scott had first proposed the march around Baltimore; and, strengthened by Wilmot's suggestion, he on the following day wrote to General Patterson, who held command in Philadelphia, that this Harrisburg and Baltimore route was perhaps the most important military avenue to Washington; adding the injunction, "Give your attention in part to this line." The Washington authorities were, however, not long in finding that this assumption was a vital error. General Scott wrote:

Wilmot to
Gen Scott,
Apr 20, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 582

Gen Scott
to Patter-
son, April
21, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 585

In my letter to you yesterday, I intended that the railroad via Harrisburg and York towards Baltimore was more important, perhaps, for reenforcing Washington,

<p>journey through Baltimore Mr Felton, heartily seconded by J Edgar Thomson, then president of the Pennsylvania Railroad, by intimate knowledge and control of facilities, railroad cars, and steam vessels, was able at once to order such new combinations on an extensive scale as were rendered necessary by the</p>	<p>Baltimore riot and the requirements of the large numbers of troops hurrying to the defense of Washington For this patriotic service the Secretary of War sent his official acknowledgment to these gentlemen, including also Mr E S Sanford, president of the American Telegraph Com- pany</p>
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CHAP VI

Gen Scott
to Patten-
son, April
22, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 587

than that from Philadelphia to Perryville, etc That supposition was founded on the Secretary's belief that the distance from a certain point on the Harrisburg railroad to the Relay House, eight miles this side of Baltimore, was but some seven miles by a good wagon road, whereas there is no good common road between the two railroads of less than thirty miles. This fact renders the railroad from Harrisburg to Baltimore of no value to us here, without a force of perhaps ten thousand men to hold Baltimore, to protect the rails and bridges near it

Through all of Friday night and Saturday the secession feeling steadily rose in Baltimore; the city, to the full extent of its ability, made ready to resist by force the further passage of troops; and to a considerable degree the same excitement, and the same resolve and preparation, spread like wild-fire to the country villages of Maryland. Through various delays it happened that Mayor Brown did not reach Washington until Sunday morning, April 21, in obedience to Lincoln's request of the previous afternoon. The mayor brought with him two members of the first Baltimore committee, and besides these a prominent and active secessionist.

Naturally, Mayor Brown and his committee-men, while they carefully kept secret their own official bridge-burning, did not undercolor their description of this insurrectionary mood of their people. The discussion was participated in by General Scott and the Cabinet, and took a wide range, lasting all Sunday forenoon (April 21). The President insisted that troops must come. General Scott explained that they could only come in one of three ways: first, through Baltimore; second, by the Harrisburg route and a march round Baltimore;

and third, by the Annapolis route. The last two routes were therefore agreed upon. CHAP VI

General Scott said if the people would permit them to go by either of these routes uninterrupted, the necessity of their passing through Baltimore would be avoided. If the people would not permit them a transit thus remote from the city, they must select their own best route, and, if need be, fight their way through Baltimore, a result which he earnestly deprecated. The President expressed his hearty concurrence in the desire to avoid a collision, and said that no more troops should be ordered through Baltimore if they were permitted to go uninterrupted by either of the other routes suggested. In this disposition the Secretary of War expressed his participation. Mayor Brown agreed to the arrangement, and promised on his part "that the city authorities would use all lawful means to prevent their citizens from leaving Baltimore to attack the troops in passing at a distance."

Mayor
Brown, Re-
port, April
21, 1861
Moore,
"Rebellion
Record,"
Vol I Doc-
uments,
p 124

With this agreement they took their leave, and the President proceeded to other business, when, to his astonishment, Mayor Brown and his companions again made their appearance, between two and three o'clock in the afternoon. They brought a sensational telegram just received by them from Mr. Garrett, president of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, which read: "Three thousand Northern troops are reported to be at Cockeysville; intense excitement prevails; churches have been dismissed, and the people are arming in mass. To prevent terrific bloodshed, the result of your interview and arrangement is awaited."

Scharf,
"Chrom-
cles of Bal-
timore,"
p 602

CHAP VI

Cockeysville is on the Harrisburg route, fifteen miles from Baltimore; and because they had no previous notice of such approach, the committee now intimated that advantage had been taken of their presence in Washington to bring these forces within striking distance of Baltimore. The Cabinet and Scott were again summoned, and the whole discussion was opened up anew.

Mayor
Brown, Re-
port, April
21, 1861
Moore,
"Rebellion
Record"
Vol I. Doc-
uments,
p 124

The President, at once, in the most decided way urged the recall of the troops, saying that he had no idea they would be there to-day, lest there should be the slightest suspicion of bad faith on his part in summoning the mayor to Washington, and allowing troops to march on the city during his absence, he desired that the troops should, if it were practicable, be sent back at once to York or Harrisburg

Orders were accordingly issued to this effect, the President, however, notifying the committee that he should not again in any wise interfere with the military arrangements. In this, as in his Sumter policy, Lincoln interposed his authority to exercise the utmost liberality and forbearance. He did not expect to appease the Maryland rebels, but to make them clearly responsible for further bloodshed, should any occur, and thereby to hold the Maryland Unionists. These were sufficient motives; and underlying them he had yet another, still more conclusive. All this examination of maps and discussion had brought the conviction to his quick penetration, in advance of any of his councilors, that the Harrisburg route was, in the present state of affairs, entirely impracticable and useless, which fact General Scott so fully set forth on the following day in his already cited letter to General Patterson.

CHAPTER VII

WASHINGTON IN DANGER

THANKS to the promptness of Governor An- CHAP VII.
drew, the Eighth Massachusetts was not far behind the Sixth. It assembled on Boston Common on Thursday morning, and was in Philadelphia on Friday evening, April 19, just in time to hear the authentic reports, as well as the multiplied and exaggerated rumors of that day's doings of the Baltimore mob, and the tragic fate of some of their comrades of the Sixth.

Massachusetts having agreed to double her quota, the four regiments thus to be received formed a brigadier-general's command, and for this command Governor Andrew designated Benjamin F. Butler, who already held that office and rank under the State militia laws. He was a lawyer by profession, but possessed in an eminent degree the peculiarly American quality of ability to adapt himself to any circumstance or duty, with a quick perception to discover and a ready courage to seize opportunities. It must be noted in passing that he was a radical Democrat in politics, and could boast that he had voted fifty times in the late Charleston Convention to make Jefferson Davis the Democratic candidate for President. But with the same positive

CHAP VII

Butler to
Andrew,
Apr 19, 1861

zeal he denounced secession, and helped to prepare the Massachusetts regiments to join in suppressing it by the authority and with the power of the Federal Government. Arrived with the Eighth Massachusetts at Philadelphia, General Butler that night telegraphed further news of the day's fighting to Governor Andrew. "I have reason to believe that Colonel Jones has gone through to Washington. Two killed only of the Massachusetts men. We shall go through at once. The road is torn up through Baltimore. Will telegraph again."

Later information caused him to modify his intention to press on. The Baltimore railroad refused to carry any more troops into that city; and if it had not, the burning of the bridges made it impossible to do so. In this dilemma, the Philadelphia railroad authorities had bethought them of a new route—that by Annapolis, previously described. The plan required not only much discussion, but great additional preparation; and Friday night and a part of Saturday passed before it was pronounced even probably feasible. By this time the Seventh regiment of New York—the *corps d'élite* of the whole Union, which on Friday afternoon started its march down Broadway "through that tempest of cheers two miles long"—had also reached Philadelphia, where it too, like the Eighth Massachusetts, was obliged seriously to study the further ways and means of getting to Washington.

Lefferts to
Cameron,
Apr 20, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 582

The various railroad and military officials in Philadelphia strongly advised the Annapolis route, and Colonel Marshall Lefferts, commanding the Seventh, telegraphed to Cameron asking orders to go that way. There was long delay in transmit-

ting the dispatch and awaiting a reply; and before the requested permission came, Colonel Lefferts changed his purpose, chartered a steamship, placed his regiment on board, and started for Washington by way of the Delaware River and Bay and the Potomac River—this decision being apparently not a little hastened by certain military rivalries and jealousies which sprang up between Colonel Lefferts and Brigadier-General Butler, acting as yet under separate State authority, and being, therefore, independent of each other's control.

Scott's reply to send troops by Havre de Grace and Annapolis, as suggested, at length came through the somewhat deranged telegraph offices; and Lefferts being gone, the order was communicated to Butler. While the Seventh New York, under Lefferts, was steaming down Delaware Bay on the transport *Boston*, the Eighth Massachusetts, under Butler, proceeded by cars to Perryville (opposite Havre de Grace), and, embarking on the ferry-boat *Maryland*, steamed down Chesapeake Bay, and by midnight was anchored off Annapolis. As events turned out, this division of forces proved an advantage, since neither of the boats was capable of containing both regiments; and twenty-four hours later the *Boston* joined the *Maryland* at Annapolis before either regiment had disembarked.

The small and antiquated town of Annapolis, the capital of Maryland and the seat of the United States Naval Academy, was for the moment in sympathy with secession. Governor Hicks had returned here from Baltimore, it being his official residence, to make ready for the special session

CHAP VII

Thomas to
Patterson,
Apr 20, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 583

Patterson
to Thomas,
Apr 21, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 585

CHAP VII of the Maryland Legislature, which, in one of his moments of timidity, he had been prevailed upon to call together to meet on the 26th of April. The Governor and the Mayor of Annapolis both strongly urged Butler not to land his men; to which he replied that he must land to get provisions, and in turn requested the Governor's formal consent

Pending this diplomatic small-talk, Butler found a piece of work to do. The old frigate *Constitution*, of historic fame, was anchored off the grounds of the Naval Academy as a training-ship; a few boatloads of Baltimore roughs might easily cut her out and convert her into a privateer. Commandant George S. Blake, who, with the majority of his officers and cadets, remained loyal, asked Butler to help pull her farther out into the bay for better security against capture. In this enterprise the greater part of Sunday, the 21st of April, was spent.

The two Sunday interviews of the Mayor of Baltimore with President Lincoln, and the resulting arrangement that troops should hereafter come by the Annapolis route, have been detailed. The telegraph, in the mean time, was still working, though with delays and interruptions. As an offset to the disagreeable necessity of ordering the Pennsylvania troops back from Cockeysville, the cheering news of Butler's arrival at Annapolis had come directly to hand. That same Sunday afternoon President Lincoln and his Cabinet met at the Navy Department, where they might deliberate in greater seclusion, and the culminating dangers to the Government underwent scrutinizing inquiry and anxious comment.

The events of Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, as developed by the military reports and the conferences with the Baltimore committees, exhibited a degree of real peril such as had not menaced the capital since the British invasion in 1814. Virginia was in arms on one side, Maryland on the other; the railroad was broken; the Potomac was probably blockaded; a touch would sever the telegraph. Of this occasion the President afterwards said: "It became necessary for me to choose whether, using only the existing means, agencies, and processes which Congress had provided, I should let the Government at once fall into ruin, or whether, availing myself of the broader powers conferred by the Constitution in cases of insurrection, I would make an effort to save it, with all its blessings, for the present age and for posterity."

Lincoln,
Special
Message,
'Globe,'
May 27, 1862,
p 2383

Surveying the emergency in its remote as well as present aspects, and assuming without hesitation the responsibilities which existing laws did not authorize, but which the needs of the hour imperatively demanded, Lincoln made a series of orders designed to meet, as well as might be, the new crisis in public affairs. A convoy was ordered out to guard the California steamers bringing heavy shipments of gold; fifteen merchant steamers were ordered to be purchased or chartered, and armed at the navy yards of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia for coast protection and blockade service; two million dollars were placed in the hands of three eminent citizens of New York, John A. Dix, George Opdyke, and Richard M. Blatchford, to be in their judgment disbursed for the public defense; another commission of leading citizens of

CHAP VII

New York, George D. Morgan, William M. Evarts, Richard M. Blatchford, and Moses H. Grinnell, in connection with Governor Edwin D Morgan, was empowered to exercise practically the full authority of the War and Navy Departments in organizing troops and forwarding supplies; two of the ablest naval officers were authorized each to arm two additional merchant vessels to cruise in the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay; and sundry minor measures and precautions were taken. Before these various orders could even be prepared for transmittal, the crowning embarrassment had come upon the Government. On that Sunday night (April 21) the telegraph operator at Baltimore reported that the insurrectionary authorities had taken possession of his office; to which the Washington telegraph superintendent laconically added, "Of course this stops all."/

So the prospect closed on Sunday night. Monday forenoon brought rather an exaggeration of the symptoms of danger. Governor Hicks, influenced by his secession surroundings at Annapolis, neither having consented to Butler's landing nor yet having dissuaded him from that purpose, turned his appeals to the President. "I feel it my duty," he wrote, "most respectfully to advise you that no more troops be ordered or allowed to pass through Maryland, and that the troops now off Annapolis be sent elsewhere; and I most respectfully urge that a truce be offered by you, so that the effusion of blood may be prevented. I respectfully suggest that Lord Lyons be requested to act as mediator between the contending parties of our country." The suggestion was not only

Hicks to
Lincoln,
Apl 22, 1861
W. R. Vol
II, pp 588,
589.

absurd in itself, but it awakened painful apprehension lest his hitherto friendly disposition might suddenly change to active hostility. This was a result to be avoided; for, even in his present neutral mood, he was still an effective breakwater against those who were striving day and night to force Maryland into some official act of insurrection. Mr. Seward therefore wrote the Governor a very kindly and yet dignified rebuke, reminding him of the days "when a general of the American Union with forces designed for the defense of its capital was not unwelcome anywhere in the State of Maryland, and certainly not at Annapolis"; and suggesting at its close "that no domestic contention whatever that may arise among the parties of this Republic ought in any case to be referred to any foreign arbitrament, least of all to the arbitrament of an European monarchy"

CH. P. VII

Seward
to Hicks,
Apr 22, 1861.
Moore,
"Rebellion
Record,"
Vol I Doc-
uments,
p 133

Meanwhile another Baltimore committee found its way to the President—this time from one of the religious bodies of that city, with a Baptist clergyman as its spokesman, who bluntly proposed that Mr Lincoln should "recognize the independence of the Southern States." Though such audacity greatly taxed his patience, he kept his temper, and replied that neither the President nor Congress possessed the power or authority to do this; and to the further request that no more troops be sent through Maryland, he answered in substance:

You, gentlemen, come here to me and ask for peace on any terms, and yet have no word of condemnation for those who are making war on us. You express great horror of bloodshed, and yet would not lay a straw in the way of those who are organizing in Virginia and else-

CHAP VII where to capture this city. The rebels attack Fort Sumter, and your citizens attack troops sent to the defense of the Government, and the lives and property in Washington, and yet you would have me break my oath and surrender the Government without a blow There is no Washington in that — no Jackson in that — there is no manhood or honor in that I have no desire to invade the South, but I must have troops to defend this capital Geographically it lies surrounded by the soil of Maryland, and mathematically the necessity exists that they should come over her territory Our men are not moles, and can't dig under the earth, they are not birds, and can't fly through the air There is no way but to march across, and that they must do But in doing this, there is no need of collision Keep your rowdies in Baltimore, and there will be no bloodshed. Go home and tell your people that if they will not attack us, we will not attack them, but if they do attack us, we will return it, and that severely

Washington now began to take on some of the aspects of a siege. The large stores of flour and grain at the Georgetown mills, and even that already loaded for shipment on schooners, were seized, and long trains of carts were engaged in removing it to safer storage in the public buildings. Prices of provisions were rising. The little passenger steamers plying on the Potomac were taken possession of by the military officers to be used for guard and picket duty on the river. The doors, windows, and stairways of the public buildings were protected by barricades, and the approaches to them guarded by sentinels. All travel and nearly all business came to a standstill, and theaters and places of amusement were closed.

With the first notice of the burning of the railroad bridges, the strangers, visitors, and transient

sojourners in the city became possessed of an uncontrollable desire to get away. So long as the trains ran to Baltimore, they proceeded to that point; from there they sought to escape northward by whatever chances of transportation offered themselves. By some of these fugitives the Government had taken the precaution to send duplicates of important orders and dispatches to Northern cities. This *sauve qui peut* quickly denuded Washington of its redundant population. While the Unionist non-combatants were flying northward, the secessionists were making quite as hurried an escape to the South; for it was strongly rumored that the Government intended to impress the whole male population of Washington into military service for the defense of the city.

One incidental benefit grew out of the panic—the Government was quickly relieved of its treasonable servants. Some hundreds of clerks resigned out of the various departments on this Monday, April 22, and the impending danger not only brought these to final decision, but also many officers of high grades and important functions. Commodore Franklin Buchanan, in charge of the Washington navy yard, together with nearly all his subordinate officers, suddenly discovered their unwillingness longer to keep their oaths and serve the United States; and that night this invaluable navy depot, with all its vast stores of material, its immense workshops and priceless machinery, was intrusted solely to the loyalty and watchfulness of Commander John A. Dahlgren and a little handful of marines, scarcely enough in number to have baffled half a dozen adroit incendiaries, or to as-

CHAP VII certain the street gossip outside the walls of the establishment.¹

Among the scores of army and navy resignations reported the same day was that of Captain John B. Magruder, 1st Artillery, then in command of a light battery on which General Scott had placed special reliance for the defense of Washington. No single case of defection gave Lincoln such astonishment and pain as this one. "Only three days ago," he said, when the fact was made known to him, "Magruder came voluntarily to me in this room, and with his own lips and in my presence repeated over and over again his asseverations and protestations of loyalty and fidelity."

J H, Diary
MS

It was not merely the loss of an officer, valuable and necessary though he might be in the emergency, but the significance of this crowning act of perfidy which troubled the President, and to the suggestiveness of which he could not close his eyes. Was there not only no patriotism left, but was all sense of personal obligation, of everyday honesty, and of manliness of character gone also? Was everything crumbling at his touch? In whom should he place confidence? To whom should he give orders, if clerks, and captains, and commodores, and quartermaster-generals, and governors of States, and justices of the Supreme Court proved false in the moment of need? If

¹ "Mem for the War Department The *Anacostia*, a small Potomac steamer, anchored off Giesboro' Point, and after remaining a short time returned down the river. The *Harnet Lane*, supposed revenue cutter, has been there a short time I have not been able to communicate with her I should wish to have a company of Massachusetts or United States troops in the yard at night if they can be spared — JOHN A. DAHLGREN, Acting Commandant, 22d April." MS

men of the character and rank of the Magruders, the Buchanans, the McCauleys, the Lees, the Johnstons, the Coopers, the Campbells were giving way, where might he not fear treachery? There was certainly no danger that all the officers of the Government would thus prove recreant; but might not the failure of a single one bearing an important trust cause a vital and irreparable disaster?

The perplexities and uncertainties of the hour are set forth with frank brevity by General Scott, in the report which was sent to the President that night of Monday, April 22:

I have but little that is certain to report, viz.: *First*, That there are three or four steamers off Annapolis, with volunteers for Washington, *Second*, That their landing will be opposed by the citizens, reenforced from Baltimore; *Third*, That the landing may be effected nevertheless by good management; and *Fourth*, That the rails on the Annapolis road (twenty miles) have been taken up. Several efforts to communicate with those troops to-day have failed, but three other detached persons are repeating the attempt, and one or more of them will, I think, succeed. Once ashore, the regiments (if but two, and there are probably more) would have no difficulty in reaching Washington on foot, other than the want of wagons to transport camp equipage; and the quartermaster that I have sent there (I do not know that he has arrived) has orders to hire wagons if he can, and if not, to impress, etc. Of rumors, the following are probable, viz.: *First*, That from 1500 to 2000 troops are at the White House (four miles below Mount Vernon, a narrow point in the Potomac) engaged in erecting a battery; *Second*, That an equal force is collected or in progress of assemblage on the two sides of the river to attack Fort Washington; and *Third*, That extra cars went up yesterday to bring down from Harper's Ferry about 2000 other troops to join in a general attack on this capital—that is, on many

CHAP VII of its fronts at once. I feel confident that with our
present forces we can defend the Capitol, the Arsenal,
and all the executive buildings (seven) against 10,000
MS troops not better than our district volunteers

Tuesday morning came, but no news from Annapolis, no volunteers up the Potomac. It was Cabinet day; and about noon, after the President and his councilors were assembled, messengers announced the arrival of two steamers at the navy yard. There was a momentary hope that these might be the long-expected ships from New York; but inquiries proved them to be the *Pawnee* and a transport on their return from the expedition to Norfolk. The worst apprehensions concerning that important post were soon realized—it was irretrievably lost. The only bit of comfort to be derived from the affair was that the vessels brought back a number of marines and sailors, who would now add a little fraction of strength to the defense of the capital. The officers of the expedition were soon before the President and Cabinet, and related circumstantially the tale of disaster and destruction which the treachery of a few officers and the credulity of the commandant had rendered unavoidable.

The Gosport navy yard, at Norfolk, Virginia, was of such value and importance that its safety, from the very beginning of Mr. Lincoln's Administration, had neither been overlooked nor neglected. But, like every other exposed or threatened point,—like Sumter, Pickens, Tortugas, Key West, Fort Monroe, Baltimore, Harper's Ferry, and Washington itself,—its fate was involved in the want of an army and navy of adequate strength. The day

the President resolved on the Sumter expedition, 250 seamen had been ordered from Brooklyn to Norfolk to render Gosport more safe. Instead of going there, it was thought necessary to change their destination to Sumter and Pickens. And so, though the danger to Gosport was not lost sight of, the reinforcements to ward it off were never available. CHAP VII

The officers of the navy yard were outwardly loyal; the commandant had grown gray in the service of his country, and enjoyed the full confidence of his equals and superiors. It was known that the secessionists had designs upon the post; but it was believed that the watchfulness which had been ordered and the measures of precaution which had been arranged under the special supervision of two trusted officers of the Navy Department, who were carrying out the personal instructions of Secretary Welles, would meet the danger. At a critical moment, Commandant Charles S. McCauley committed a fatal mistake. The subordinate officers of the yard, professing loyalty, practiced treason, and lured him into their designs.

Several valuable vessels lay at the navy yard. To secure them eventually for Virginia, Governor Letcher had, among his first acts of hostility, attempted to obstruct the channel from Norfolk to Fort Monroe by means of sunken vessels. But the effort failed; the passage still remained practicable. Ascertaining this, Commodore James Alden and Chief Engineer Benjamin F. Isherwood, specially sent for the task by Secretary Welles, had, with the help of the commandant of the yard, prepared the best ships—the *Merrimac*, the *Ger-*

CHAP VII *mantown*, the *Plymouth*, and the *Dolphin*—for quick removal to Fort Monroe. The engines of the *Merrimac* were put in order, the fires under her boilers were lighted, the moment of her departure had been announced, when suddenly a change came over the spirit of Commandant McCauley. Virginia passed her ordinance of secession; the traitorous officers of the navy yard were about to throw off their mask and desert their flag; and, as a parting stroke of intrigue, they persuaded the commandant that he must retain the *Merrimac* for the security of the yard. Yielding to this treacherous advice, he countermanded her permission to depart and ordered her fires to be put out. Thus baffled, Isherwood and Alden hastened back to Washington to obtain the superior orders of the Secretary over this most unexpected and astounding action.

They reached Washington on this errand respectively on the 18th and 19th of April, just at the culminating point of insurrection and danger. Hasty consultations were held and energetic orders were issued. The *Pawnee*, just returned from her Summer cruise, was again coaled, supplied, and fitted out—processes consuming precious hours, but which could not be omitted. On the evening of April 19 she steamed down the Potomac under command of Commodore Hiram Paulding, with discretionary orders to defend or to destroy. Next evening, April 20, having landed at Fort Monroe and taken on board three to five hundred men of the Third Massachusetts, only that morning arrived from Boston, and who embarked without a single ration, the *Pawnee* proceeded to Norfolk, passing without difficulty through the seven sunken hulks

in the Elizabeth River. But Commodore Paulding was too late. The commandant, once more successfully phed with insidious advice, had yielded to the second suggestion of his juniors, and had scuttled the removable ships—ostensibly to prevent their being seized and used by the rebels. As they were slowly sinking, no effort to remove them could succeed, and no resource was left but to destroy everything so far as could be done. Accordingly, there being bright moonlight, the greater part of Saturday night was devoted to the work of destruction. Several parties were detailed to fire the ships and the buildings and to lay a mine to blow up the dry-dock, and the sky was soon lighted by an immense conflagration

Yet, with all this effort, the sacrifice was left incomplete. Not more than half the buildings were consumed. The workshops, with their valuable machinery, escaped. The 1500 to 2000 heavy cannon in the yard could neither be removed nor rendered unserviceable. Some unforeseen accident finally prevented the explosion of the dry-dock. Of the seven ships burned to the water's edge, the hull of the *Merrimac* was soon afterwards raised, and in the course of events changed by the rebels into the iron-clad *Merrimac*, or, as they named her, the *Virginia*. At five o'clock on Sunday morning the *Pawnee* considered her work finished, and steamed away from Gosport, followed by the sailing-ship *Cumberland*.

No point of peril had been so clearly foreseen, and apparently so securely guarded against, as the loss of the three or four valuable ships at Norfolk; and yet, in spite of foresight and precaution, they

CHAP. VII had gone to worse than ruin through the same train of circumstances which had lost Sumter and permitted the organization of the Montgomery rebellion. The loss of ships and guns was, however, not all, behind these was the damaging moral effect upon the Union cause and feeling.

For four consecutive days each day had brought a great disaster—Virginia's secession on the 17th; the burning of Harper's Ferry on the 18th; the Baltimore riot and destruction of railroad bridges on the 19th; the abandonment and destruction of the great navy yard and its ships on the night of the 20th. This began to look like an irresistible current of fate. No popular sentiment could long stem such a tide of misfortune. The rebels of Virginia, Maryland, and especially of Washington began to feel that Providence wrought in their behalf, and that their conspiracy was already crowned with success. Evidently with such a feeling, on this same Tuesday, Associate Justice John A. Campbell, still a member of the Supreme Court and under oath to support the Constitution of the United States, again sent a letter of aid and comfort to Jefferson Davis. He wrote:

Maryland is the object of chief anxiety with the North and the Administration. Their fondest hope will be to command the Chesapeake and relieve this capital. Their pride and their fanaticism would be sadly depressed by a contrary issue. This will be the great point of contest in all negotiations. I incline to think that they are prepared to abandon the south of the Potomac. But not beyond. Maryland is weak. She has no military men of talents, and I did hear that Colonel Huger was offered command and declined it—however, his resignation had not been accepted. Huger is plainly not competent for

such a purpose Lee is in Virginia Think of the condition of Baltimore and provide for it, for there is the place of danger The events at Baltimore have placed a new aspect upon everything to the North There is a perfect storm there While it has to be met, no unnecessary addition should be made to increase it

CHAP. VII

Campbell
to Davis,
Apr 23, 1861
MS

Another night of feverish public unrest, another day of anxiety to the President — Wednesday, April 24 There was indeed no attack on the city; but, on the other hand, no arrival of troops to place its security beyond doubt. Repetition of routine duties; repetition of unsubstantial rumors; long faces in the streets; a holiday quiet over the city; closed shutters and locked doors of business houses; the occasional clatter of a squad of cavalry from point to point; sentinels about the departments; sentinels about the Executive Mansion; Willard's Hotel, which a week before was swarming with busy crowds, now deserted as if smitten by a plague, with only furtive servants to wake echoes along the vacant corridors — an oppressive contrast to the throng of fashion and beauty which had so lately made it a scene of festivity from midday to midnight.

Ever since the telegraph stopped on Sunday night, the Washington operators had been listening for the ticking of their instruments, and had occasionally caught fugitive dispatches passing between Maryland secessionists, which were for the greater part immediately known to be untrustworthy; for General Scott kept up a series of military scouts along the Baltimore railroad as far as Annapolis Junction, twenty miles from Washington, from which point a branch railroad ran at a right

CHAP VII angle to the former, twenty miles to Annapolis, on Chesapeake Bay. The general dared not risk a detachment permanently to hold the junction; no considerable secession force had been encountered, and the railroad was yet safe. But it was known, or at least strongly probable, that the volunteers from the North had been at Annapolis since Sunday morning. Why did they not land? Why did they not advance? The Annapolis road was known to be damaged; but could they not march twenty miles?

The previous day (April 23) had, by some lucky chance, brought a New York mail three days old. The newspapers in it contained breezy premonitions of the Northern storm—Anderson's enthusiastic reception; the departure of the Seventh New York regiment; the sailing of Governor Sprague with his Rhode Islanders; the monster meeting in Union Square, with the outpouring of half a million of people in processions and listening to speeches from half a dozen different stands; the energetic measures of the New York Common Council; the formation of the Union Defense Committee; whole columns of orders and proclamations; the flag-raising; the enlistments; the chartering and freighting of ships; and from all quarters news of the wild, jubilant uprising of the whole immense population of the free States. All this was gratifying, pride-kindling, reassuring; and yet, read and re-read with avidity in Washington that day, it would always bring after it the galling reflection that all this magnificent outburst of patriotism was paralyzed by the obstacle of a twenty miles' march between Annapolis and the junction. Had the men of the North no legs?

Lincoln, by nature and habit so calm, so equable, so undemonstrative, nevertheless passed this period of interrupted communication and isolation from the North in a state of nervous tension which put all his great powers of mental and physical endurance to their severest trial. General Scott's reports, though invariably expressing his confidence in successful defense, frankly admitted the evident danger; and the President, with his acuteness of observation and his rapidity and correctness of inference, lost no single one of the external indications of doubt and apprehension. Day after day prediction failed and hope was deferred; troops did not come, ships did not arrive, railroads remained broken, messengers failed to reach their destination. That fact itself demonstrated that he was environed by the unknown—and that whether a Union or a Secession army would first reach the capital was at best an uncertainty.

To a coarse or vulgar nature such a situation would have brought only one of two feelings—either overpowering personal fear, or overweening bravado. But Lincoln, almost a giant in physical stature and strength, combined in his intellectual nature a masculine courage and power of logic with an ideal sensitiveness of conscience and a sentimental tenderness as delicate as a woman's. This Presidential trust which he had assumed was to him not a mere regalia of rank and honor. Its terrible duties and responsibilities seemed rather a coat of steel armor, heavy to bear, and cutting remorselessly into the quick flesh. That one of the successors of Washington should find himself even to this degree in the hands of his enemies

CHAP VII was personally humiliating; but that the majesty of a great nation should be thus insulted and its visible symbols of authority be placed in jeopardy; above all, that the hitherto glorious example of the republic to other nations should stand in this peril of surprise and possible sudden collapse, the Constitution be scoffed, and human freedom become a by-word and reproach — this must have begot in him an anxiety approaching torture.

In the eyes of his countrymen and of the world he was holding the scales of national destiny; he alone knew that for the moment the forces which made the beam vibrate with such uncertainty were beyond his control. In others' society he gave no sign of these inner emotions. But once, on the afternoon of the 23d, the business of the day being over, the Executive office deserted, after walking the floor alone in silent thought for nearly half an hour, he stopped and gazed long and wistfully out of the window down the Potomac in the direction of the expected ships; and, unconscious of other presence in the room, at length broke out with irrepressible anguish in the repeated exclamation, "Why don't they come! Why don't they come!"

One additional manifestation of this bitterness of soul occurred on the day following, though in a more subdued manner. The wounded soldiers of the Sixth Massachusetts, including several officers, came to pay a visit to the President. They were a little shy when they entered the room — having the traditional New England awe of authorities and rulers. Lincoln received them with sympathetic kindness which put them at ease after the inter-

change of the first greetings. His words of sincere thanks for their patriotism and their suffering, his warm praise of their courage, his hearty recognition of their great service to the public, and his earnestly expressed confidence in their further devotion, quickly won their trust. He spoke to them of the position and prospect of the city, contrasting their prompt arrival with the unexplained delay which seemed to have befallen the regiments supposed to be somewhere on their way from the various States. Pursuing this theme, he finally fell into a tone of irony to which only intense feeling ever drove him. "I begin to believe," said he, "that there is no North. The Seventh regiment is a myth. Rhode Island is another. You are the only real thing." There are few parchment brevets as precious as such a compliment, at such a time, from such a man.

CHAP VII

J H. Diary
MS

However much the tardiness of the Annapolis reinforcements justified the President's sarcasm, they were at last actually approaching. We left Butler engaged in assisting the school-ship *Constitution* to a more secure position. The aid proved effectual; but the day's work ended by the ferry-boat *Maryland*, with the Eighth Massachusetts still on board, getting hard aground in the shoal water of Annapolis harbor. In this helpless predicament, with nothing to eat but hard pilot-bread and raw salt pork furnished from the *Constitution*, and with no water to drink, the regiment passed the night of Sunday. Early next morning (Monday, April 22) the *Boston* arrived, bringing the Seventh New York; and thus these two regiments, so lately parted at Philadelphia, were once more united.

CHAP VII Colonel Lefferts had proceeded on his independent course to Fort Monroe; but receiving no intelligence concerning the Potomac route, concluded, after all, to adopt the more prudent plan of steaming up Chesapeake Bay to Annapolis

The *Boston* at once set to work, but without eventual success, to pull the *Maryland* into deeper water. Meanwhile the officers of the two regiments were holding interviews and correspondence with Commandant Blake of the Naval School on the one hand, and with the Maryland authorities on the other. Governor Hicks, in punctilious assertion of the paramount State sovereignty of Maryland, protested, in writing, against landing the troops. The Mayor of Annapolis joined in the protest; though privately both declared that Maryland was loyal to the Union, and that they would make no military resistance. That afternoon, both regiments were landed. There was yet a certain friction of military jealousy and refusal to cooperate between Butler and Lefferts; both were eager to proceed to Washington, but differed in their plans; and the many and apparently authentic rumors of the opposing force that would meet them from Baltimore caused discussion and delay. They had no transportation, few rations, and little ammunition.

Butler took the first practical measures, by ordering the railroad depot and buildings to be occupied. Here an old locomotive was found, the machinery of which had been carefully disarranged. The mechanical skill of the Yankee militiamen now asserted its value. Private Charles Homans, of the Eighth Massachusetts, at once recognized the locomotive as having been built in "our shop";

and calling to his help several machinists like himself from the Massachusetts regiment, they had no great difficulty in putting it in running order. Tuesday morning (April 23) showing still no warlike demonstrations from any quarter, the surroundings of the town were reconnoitered, and two companies of the Eighth Massachusetts pushed out three and a half miles along the railroad. A beginning was also made towards repairing the track, which was found torn up and displaced here and there. In this work, and in testing the newly repaired locomotive and improvising a train, another day slipped by. In the evening, however, two of the eight messengers sent out from Washington to Annapolis succeeded in reaching there, the second one bringing the definite orders of General Scott that Butler should remain and hold the place, and that the advancing troops should repair the railroad. That night, also, came four or more steamships with as many additional regiments of volunteers.

Wednesday morning, April 24, being the fourth day at Annapolis for the Eighth Massachusetts and the third for the Seventh New York, they started on their twenty miles' march to the junction. A couple of extemporized platform cars on which the Seventh mounted their little brass howitzers, the patched-up locomotive, and two rickety passenger cars constituted their artillery, baggage, supply, ambulance, and construction train all in one. Thus provided, the two regiments marched, scouted, laid track, and built bridges as occasion required; now fraternizing and cooperating with hearty good-will. It was slow and tedious work;

CHAP VII they were not inured to nor provided for even such holiday campaigning as this. Luckily they had fine weather—a warm, sunny, spring day, succeeded by a clear night with a full moon to light it. So they clung pluckily to their duty, hungry and sleepy though they were, all day and all night of Wednesday, and arrived at the junction about daybreak of Thursday. All the previous rumors had taught them that here they might expect a rebel force and fight. The anticipation proved groundless; they learned, on the contrary, that a train from Washington had come to this place for them the day before. It soon again made its appearance; and, quickly embarking on it, by noon the Seventh New York was at its destination.

Those who were in the Federal capital on that Thursday, April 25, will never, during their lives, forget the event. An indescribable gloom had hung over Washington nearly a week, paralyzing its traffic and crushing out its life. As soon as the arrival was known, an immense crowd gathered at the depot to obtain ocular evidence that relief had at length reached the city. Promptly debarking and forming, the Seventh marched up Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House. As they passed up the magnificent street, with their well-formed ranks, their exact military step, their soldierly bearing, their gayly floating flags, and the inspiring music of their splendid regimental band, they seemed to sweep all thought of danger and all taint of treason out of that great national thoroughfare and out of every human heart in the Federal city. The presence of this single regiment seemed to turn the scales of fate. Cheer

upon cheer greeted them, windows were thrown up, houses opened, the population came forth upon the streets as for a holiday. It was an epoch in American history. For the first time, the combined spirit and power of Liberty entered the nation's capital.

CHAPTER VIII

REBELLIOUS MARYLAND

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NO sooner had the secession ordinance been secretly passed by the Convention of Virginia than Governor Letcher informed Jefferson Davis of the event, and, doubtless by preconcert, invited him to send a commissioner from Montgomery to Richmond to negotiate an alliance. The adhesion of Virginia was an affair of such magnitude and pressing need to the Cotton States, that Davis made the Vice-President of the new Confederacy, Alexander H. Stephens, his plenipotentiary, who accordingly arrived at Richmond on the 22d of April. Here he found everything favorable to his mission. The convention was filled with a new-born zeal of insurrection; many lately stubborn Union members were willingly accepting offices in the extemporized army of the State; the Governor had that day appointed Robert E. Lee to the command in chief of the Virginia forces, military and naval, which choice the convention immediately confirmed.

Stephens was shrewd enough to perceive that his real negotiation lay neither with the Governor nor the convention, but with this newly created chieftain. That very evening he invited Lee to

a conference, at which the late Federal colonel forgot the sentiment written by his own hand two days before, that he never again desired to draw his sword except in defense of his native State, and now expressed great eagerness for the proposed alliance. Lee being willing, the remainder of the negotiation was easy; and two days afterwards (April 24) Stephens and certain members of the convention signed a formal military league, making Virginia an immediate member of the "Confederate States," and placing her armies under the command of Jefferson Davis—thus treating with contempt the convention proviso that the secession ordinance should only take effect after ratification by the people, the vote on which had been set for the fourth Thursday of May.

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Lee to
Gen Scott,
Apl 20, 1861
Jones,
"Life of
Lee," p 139

Moore,
"Rebellion
Record"
Vol I Doc-
uments,
p 154

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Lee and others endured without protest this military usurpation, under which they became beneficiaries. No excuse for it could be urged. Up to this time not the slightest sign of hostility to Virginia had been made by the Lincoln Administration—no threats, no invasion, no blockade; the burning of Harper's Ferry and Gosport were induced by the hostile action of Virginia herself. On the contrary, even after those acts, Mr. Lincoln repeated in a letter to Reverdy Johnson, which will be presently quoted, the declarations made to the Virginia commissioners on the 13th, that he intended no war, no invasion, no subjugation—nothing but defense of the Government.

At the time of the Baltimore riot the telegraph was still undisturbed; and by its help, as well as by personal information and private letters, that startling occurrence and the succeeding insurrectionary

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uprising were speedily made known throughout the entire South, where they excited the liveliest satisfaction and most sanguine hopes. Southern newspapers became clamorous for an advance on Washington; some of the most pronounced Richmond conspirators had all along been favorable to such an enterprise; and extravagant estimates of possibilities were telegraphed to Montgomery. They set forth that Baltimore was in arms, Maryland rising, Lincoln in a trap, and not more than 1200 regulars and 3000 volunteers in Washington; that the rebels had 3000 men at Harper's Ferry; that Governor Letcher had seized three to five steamers on the James River; that the connecting Southern railroads could carry 5000 to 7000 men daily at the rate of 350 miles per day. "As a leader we want Davis. An hour now is worth years of common fighting. One dash, and Lincoln is taken, the country saved, and the leader who does it will be immortalized."

Bird to
Walker,
Apl 20, 1861
W R Vol
II, pp 771,
772.

This, from a railroad superintendent supposed to have practical skill in transportation, looked plausible. The Montgomery Cabinet caught the enthusiasm of the moment, and on April 22 Jefferson Davis telegraphed to Governor Letcher at Richmond:

In addition to the forces heretofore ordered, requisitions have been made for thirteen regiments; eight to rendezvous at Lynchburg, four at Richmond, and one at Harper's Ferry. Sustain Baltimore, if practicable. We reenforce you.

Davis to
Letcher,
Apl 22, 1861,
W R Vol
II, p 773.

This dispatch shows us what a farce even the Virginia military league was, since two days before its conclusion "foreign" rebel troops were already

ordered to the "sacred soil" of the Old Dominion. Governor Letcher was doubtless willing enough to respond to the suggestion of Davis, but apparently had neither the necessary troops nor preparation. He had as yet been able to muster but a shadowy force on the line of the Potomac, notwithstanding his Adjutant-General's pretentious report of the previous December. Nevertheless, hoping that events might ripen the opportunity into better conditions for success, he lost no time in sending such encouragement and help as were at his control. The rebel commander at Harper's Ferry had communicated with the Baltimore authorities and effected a cordial understanding with them, and they promised to warn him of hostile menace or approach. Senator James M. Mason thereupon was dispatched to Baltimore. He seems to have agreed to supply the Maryland rebels with such arms as Virginia could spare; and some 2000 muskets actually found their way to Baltimore from this source during the following week, though an arrangement to send twenty cannon (32-pounders) to the same city from the Gosport navy yard apparently failed.

But it would appear that the project of a dash at Washington found unexpected opposition in the counsels of Virginia's new military chief, Robert E. Lee, who assumed command of the State forces April 23. He instructed the officers at Alexandria and along the Potomac to act on the defensive, to establish camps of instruction, and collect men and provisions. This course was little to the liking of some of the more ardent rebels. They telegraphed (in substance) that Davis's immediate presence at Richmond was essential; that his non-arrival was

CHAP VIII

Harper to Richardson, April 21, 1861
W R Vol II, p 72

Stuart to Board of Police, May 2, 1861
McPherson, "History of the Rebellion," p 394

Gwynn by Watts, to Lee, April 27, 1861 MS

Lee, General Orders, April 23, 1861
W R Vol II, pp 775, 776

Lee to Coke, April 24, 1861
W R Vol II, p 777

CHAP VIII causing dissatisfaction; that the troops had no confidence in Lee and were murmuring; that there were signs of temporizing, hopes of a settlement without collision, and consequent danger of demoralization; that Lee "dwelt on enthusiasm North and against aggression from us." Said another dispatch

Duncan to
Walker,
Apr 26, 1861
MS

Have conversed with General Robert E Lee He wishes to repress enthusiasm of our people His troops not ready, although pouring in every hour They remain here General Cocke has three hundred and no more. Corps of observation on Potomac near Alexandria He considers Maryland helpless, needing encouragement and succor Believes 20,000 men in and near Washington.

In no State were the secession plottings more determined and continuous than in Maryland. From the first a small but able and unwearying knot of Baltimore conspirators sought to commit her people to rebellion by the empty form of a secession ordinance. They made speeches, held conventions, besieged the Governor with committees; they joined the Washington conspirators in treasonable caucus; they sent recruits to Charleston; they incited the Baltimore riot; and there is no doubt that in these doings they reflected a strong minority sentiment in the State.

With such a man as Pickens or Letcher in the executive chair they might have succeeded, but in Governor Hicks they found a constant stumbling-block and an irremovable obstacle. He gave Southern commissioners the cold shoulder He refused at first to call the Legislature. He declined to order a vote on holding a convention. He informed General Scott of the rebel plots of

Maryland, and testified of treasonable designs before the investigating committee of Congress. His enemies have accused him of treachery, and cite in proof a letter which they allege he wrote a few days after Lincoln's election in which he inquired whether a certain militia company would be "good men to send out to kill Lincoln and his men." If the letter be not a forgery, it was at most an ill-judged and awkward piece of badinage; for his repeated declarations and acts leave no doubt that from first to last his heart was true to the Union. He had the serious fault of timidity, and in several instances foolishly gave way to popular clamor; but in every case he soon resumed his hostility to secession.

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The Baltimore riot, as we have seen, put a stop to the Governor's arrangements to raise and arm four regiments of Maryland volunteers, of picked Union men, for United States service within the State or at Washington. Instead of this, he, in the flurry of the uprising, called out the existing militia companies, mainly disloyal in sentiment and officered by secessionists. The Baltimore authorities collected arms, bought munitions, and organized companies to resist the passage of troops; they forbade the export of provisions, regulated the departure of vessels, controlled the telegraph. General Stewart, commanding the State militia, established posts and patrols, and in effect Maryland became hostile territory to the North and to the Government. For three or four days treason was rampant; all Union men were intimidated; all Union expression or manifestation was suppressed by mob violence. The hitherto fearless Union

Apr 19, 1861

CHAP VIII newspapers, in order to save their offices and material from destruction, were compelled to drift with the flood, and to print editorials advising, in vague terms, that all must now unite in the defense of Maryland.

It was in this storm and stress of insurrection that Governor Hicks protested against Butler's landing, and sent Lincoln his proposal of mediation; and on the same day (April 22), and by the same influence, he was prevailed upon to summon the Legislature to meet on the 26th. It so happened that the seats of the Baltimore members were vacant. A special election, dominated by the same passions, was held on the 24th. Only a "States Rights" ticket was voted for; and of the 30,000 electors in the city 9244, without opposition, elected the little clique of secession conspirators — the Union men not daring to nominate candidates or come to the polls.

W R Vol
II, pp 586-
589

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For the moment the leading Unionists of Maryland deemed their true rôle one of patience and conciliation. In this spirit Reverdy Johnson, a lawyer and statesman of fame and influence both at home and abroad, came to Lincoln upon the stereotyped errand to obtain some assurance in writing that he meditated no invasion or subjugation of the South; to which the President confidentially replied:

I forebore to answer yours of the 22d because of my aversion (which I thought you understood) to getting on paper and furnishing new grounds for misunderstanding. I do say the sole purpose of bringing troops here is to defend this Capital. I do say I have no purpose to invade Virginia with them or any other troops, as I understand the word invasion. But suppose Virginia sends

her troops, or admits others through her borders, to assail this Capital, am I not to repel them even to the crossing of the Potomac, if I can? Suppose Virginia erects, or permits to be erected, batteries on the opposite shore to bombard the city, are we to stand still and see it done? In a word, if Virginia strikes us, are we not to strike back, and as effectively as we can? Again, are we not to hold Fort Monroe (for instance), if we can? I have no objection to declare a thousand times that I have no purpose to invade Virginia or any other State, but I do not mean to let them invade us without striking back.

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Lincoln to
Johnson,
Apl 24, 1861
MS

Mr. Johnson replied, thanking the President for his frankness, and indorsing all his policy. "In a word," he said, "all that your note suggests would be my purpose were I intrusted with your high office." He also promised that the President's note should "be held perfectly confidential." But it appears that Mr. Johnson chose his confidants with very poor judgment; for within four days its substance was written from Washington direct to Jefferson Davis.

Johnson to
Lincoln,
Apl 24, 1861
MS

Campbell
to Davis,
Apl 28, 1861
MS

By no means the least of the difficult problems before Mr. Lincoln and his Cabinet was the question how to deal with the Maryland Legislature, so unexpectedly called to assemble. The special election in Baltimore,¹ held under secession terrorism, had resulted in the unopposed choice of ten delegates from the city, all believed to be disloyal, and several of them known to be conspicuous se-

¹ "As the Legislature, at its last session, had unseated the delegates from Baltimore, a special election was held in that city on April 24. But one ticket was presented, and 9244 ballots were cast for Messrs John C Brune, Ross Winans, Henry M. War-

field, J Hanson Thomas, T Parkin Scott, H M Morfitt, S Teackle Wallis, Charles H Pitts, Wm G. Harrison, and Lawrence Sangston, the States Rights candidates"—J. Thomas Scharf, "History of Maryland," Vol III, p 424.

CHAP VIII cessionists. With this fresh element of treason suddenly added to a legislative body so small in numbers, it seemed morally certain that its first act would be to arm the State, and pass something equivalent to a secession ordinance. Should this be permitted? How could it best be prevented? Ought the Legislature to be arrested? Should it be dispersed by force? General Butler was at Annapolis, where it was expected that the session would be held, and he signified more than willingness to act in the matter.

The plans were discussed in Cabinet with great contrariety of opinion. Some of the least belligerent of the President's councilors were by this time in hot blood over the repeated disasters and indignities which the Government had suffered, and began to indulge in the unreasoning temper and impatience of the irritated public opinion of the North, where one of the largest and most influential journals had intimated that the country needed a dictator. Mr. Bates filed a written opinion—in spirit a protest—declaring that the treasonable acts in Virginia and Maryland were encouraged by the fact that “we frighten nobody, we hurt nobody”; though he failed to suggest any other than merely vindictive remedies that were immediately feasible. Mr. Chase also partook of this frame of mind, and wrote the President a curt note of querulous complaint, eminently prophetic of his future feelings and attitude toward Mr. Lincoln:

Let me beg you to remember that the disunionists have anticipated us in everything, and that as yet we have accomplished nothing but the destruction of our

own property Let me beg you to remember also that it has been a darling object with the disunionists to secure the passage of a secession ordinance by Maryland. The passage of that ordinance will be the signal for the entry of disunion forces into Maryland. It will give a color of law and regularity to rebellion and thereby triple its strength The custom-house in Baltimore will be seized and Fort McHenry attacked — perhaps taken What next? Do not, I pray you, let this new success of treason be inaugurated in the presence of American troops Save us from this new humiliation A word to the brave old commanding general will do the work of prevention You alone can give the word.

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Chase to
Lincoln,
Apr 23, 1861
Schuckers,
"Life of S.
P. Chase,"
p 424

The bad taste and injustice of such language consisted in its assumption that the President was somehow culpable for what had already occurred, whereas Mr. Chase had in the beginning been more conciliatory towards the rebels than had Mr. Lincoln. With a higher conception of the functions of the Presidential office, Mr. Lincoln treated public clamor and the fretfulness of Cabinet ministers alike, with quiet toleration. Again, as before, and as ever afterward, he listened attentively to such advice as his Cabinet had to give, but reserved the decision to himself. He looked over the Attorney-General's legal notes, weighed the points of political expediency, canvassed carefully the probabilities of military advantage, and embodied his final directions in a letter to General Scott:

MY DEAR SIR. The Maryland Legislature assembles to-morrow at Annapolis, and not improbably will take action to arm the people of that State against the United States The question has been submitted to and considered by me, whether it would not be justifiable, upon the ground of necessary defense, for you, as General-in-Chief of the United States Army, to arrest or disperse

CHAP VIII the members of that body I think it would not be justifiable, nor efficient for the desired object *First*, they have a clearly legal right to assemble; and we cannot know in advance that their action will not be lawful and peaceful And if we wait until they shall have acted, their arrest or dispersion will not lessen the effect of their action

Secondly, we cannot permanently prevent their action If we arrest them, we cannot long hold them as prisoners, and, when liberated, they will immediately reassemble and take their action. And precisely the same if we simply disperse them. They will immediately reassemble in some other place

I therefore conclude that it is only left to the commanding general to watch and await their action, which, if it shall be to arm their people against the United States, he is to adopt the most prompt and efficient means to counteract, even if necessary to the bombardment of their cities, and, in the extremest necessity, the suspension of the writ of *habeas corpus*

Lincoln to
Gen Scott,
Apr 25, 1861
MS

Thus directed, General Scott wrote to General Butler on the following day :

In the absence of the undersigned, the foregoing instructions are turned over to Brigadier-General B F Butler of the Massachusetts Volunteers, or other officer commanding at Annapolis, who will carry them out in a right spirit; that is, with moderation and firmness In the case of arrested individuals notorious for their hostility to the United States, the prisoners will be safely kept and duly cared for, but not surrendered except on the order of the commander aforesaid

Gen Scott
to Butler,
Apr 26, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 602

At the last moment, however, conscious of the offenses against the Government which some of their members were meditating, the Maryland Legislature induced the Governor to convene their special session at the town of Frederick. Here Governor Hicks sent them his special message on the 27th, reciting the recent occurrences,

transmitting his correspondence with the various Federal authorities, and expressing the conviction "that the only safety of Maryland lies in preserving a neutral position between our brethren of the North and of the South." At the same time he admitted the right of transit for Federal troops, and counseled "that we shall array ourselves for Union and peace." The lack of coherence and consistency in the message was atoned for by its underlying spirit of loyalty.

Meanwhile the plentiful arrival of volunteers enabled the Government to strengthen its hold upon Annapolis and the railroad. The military "Department of Annapolis" was created, and General Butler assigned to its command. This embraced twenty miles on each side of the railroad from Annapolis to Washington; and all of Maryland not included in these limits was left in General Patterson's "Department of Pennsylvania." Measures were taken to concentrate sufficient troops at Harrisburg and at Philadelphia to approach Baltimore in force from those quarters and permanently to occupy the city; and to give the military ample authority for every contingency, the President issued the following additional order to General Scott:

You are engaged in suppressing an insurrection against the laws of the United States. If at any point on or in the vicinity of any military line which is now or which shall be used between the city of Philadelphia and the city of Washington you find resistance which renders it necessary to suspend the writ of *habeas corpus* for the public safety, you personally, or through the officer in command at the point at which resistance occurs, are authorized to suspend that writ.

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Hicks,
Special
Message,
Apl. 27, 1861.
Moore,
"Rebellion
Record."
Vol. I. Doc-
uments,
pp. 159-161.

Butler to
Gen. Scott,
Apl. 27, 1861.
W. R. Vol.
II., pp. 604-
606.

Thomas,
General
Orders,
Apl. 27, 1861.
W. R. Vol.
II., p. 607.

Lincoln to
Gen. Scott,
Apl. 27, 1861.
McPherson,
"History of the
Rebellion,"
p. 177.

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Having run its course about a week or ten days, the secession frenzy of Baltimore subsided. The railroad managers of that city once more tendered their services to the War Department; but Secretary Cameron, instead of giving them immediate encouragement, ordered that the Annapolis route be opened for public travel and traffic. Their isolation, first created by the bridge-burning, was thus continued and soon began to tell seriously upon their business interests, as well as upon the general industries and comfort of the city. On the 4th of May General Butler, under Scott's orders, moved forward and took post with two regiments at the Relay House, eight miles from Baltimore, where he could control the westward trains and cut off communication with Harper's Ferry.

The significance of all these circumstances did not escape the popular observation. The Union newspapers took courage and printed bold leaders; the city government dismissed the rebel militia and permitted bridges and telegraphs to be repaired. Governor Hicks issued a proclamation for the election of Representatives in Congress to attend the coming special session on the 4th of July; and also, by special message to the Legislature and publication in the newspapers, repudiated the charge that he had consented to the bridge-burning. The Unionists of both city and State, gaining confidence with the strong evidences of reaction, began to hold meetings and conventions vigorously to denounce secession, and to demonstrate that they were in a decided majority.

The manifest and sweeping change in popular feeling produced due effect upon the Legislature.

The first movements of that body were somewhat contradictory. Both branches declared that they did not possess the requisite authority to commit the State to secession; but they legalized the insurrectionary act of Baltimore, and gave the city authorities unlimited discretion to raise and appropriate moneys for defense. Secret deliberations of the Senate soon developed the disloyalty of that branch; and a bill placing the military control of the State in the hands of a secession "Board of Public Safety" was passed to a second reading by fourteen to eight. This measure, as its scope and purpose became known, met such fierce opposition both in and out of the Legislature, and concentrated the Union sentiment to such a degree that its authors felt themselves compelled to abandon it. It was shaded off into a project for a convention, and this again, under the popular protest and reaction, dwindled away into spiteful reports and strings of resolutions in both branches, remonstrating against the military occupation of Maryland, against the prosecution of the war, and urging the Government to recognize the independence of the South. It is said that Senator Mason of Virginia appeared before the Legislature as a commissioner to negotiate a military alliance; if so, he found public opinion too strong and the Union armies too near to consummate the scheme, whatever encouragement he may have received from a minority of the members.

The question of attempted secession was for the moment set at rest by sending a committee of three to President Lincoln. They were respectfully received (May 4) and assured by him that he would

CHAP VIII
Scharf,
"History of
Maryland"
Vol. III,
p. 444

CHAP VIII act in no revengeful spirit; but he, together with Seward and Cameron, gave the committee to understand that they were well informed of the treasonable spirit which animated a considerable minority of the Legislature, and that the Government was not only firm in its purpose but also now had ample force at hand to sustain the Unionists of Maryland, and maintain the military approaches to the capital. The committee returned to Frederick and reported the result of their mission; stating that they felt "painfully confident that a war is to be waged to reduce all the seceding States to allegiance to the United States Government, and that the whole military power of the Federal Government will be exerted to accomplish that purpose"; while in a previous portion of their report they had already declared that they "did not feel themselves authorized to enter into any engagements or arrangements with the Federal Government to induce it to change its relations to the State of Maryland, considering it proper under the circumstances to leave the entire discretion and responsibility of the existing state of things to that Government."

Report of
Otho Scott,
R M Mc-
Lane, and
W J Ross,
to the Gen-
eral As-
sembly of
Maryland,
May 6, 1861

Little by little loyalty and authority asserted themselves. About the 1st of May General Scott began preparing to reestablish the transit of troops through Baltimore, and on the 9th the first detachment since the riot of April 19 successfully made the journey. Some 1300 men in all, including Sherman's regular battery from Minnesota and 500 regulars from Texas, were brought in transports from Perryville and landed at Locust Point under the guns of the *Harriet Lane*, embarked in

cars, and carried through South Baltimore. The city authorities, police, and a large concourse of people were present; and the precautions and arrangements were so thorough that not the slightest disturbance occurred. Four days after this (May 13) the railroad brought the first train from Philadelphia over its repaired track and restored bridges. CHAP VIII

The Maryland Legislature, finding its occupation gone and yet nursing an obstinate secession sympathy, adjourned on May 14 to meet again on the 4th of June. About the same time the people of Baltimore received a surprise. Late on the evening of May 13, under cover of an opportune thunder-storm, General Butler moved from the Relay House into the city with about a thousand men, the bulk of his force being the famous Sixth Massachusetts which had been mobbed there on the 19th of April. The movement was entirely unauthorized and called forth a severe rebuke from General Scott; but it met no resistance and was loudly applauded by the impatient public opinion of the North, which could ill comprehend the serious military risk it involved. 1861.

The general carried his spirit of bravado still further. He made his camp on Federal Hill, which he proceeded to fortify; and on the afternoon of the 14th sent a detachment of only thirty-five men to seize a lot of arms stored near the locality of the riot. The little squad of volunteers found the warehouse and were given possession of the arms,—2200 muskets sent from Virginia, and 4020 pikes of the John Brown pattern, made for the city by the Winans establishment during the riot week,—

CHAP VIII and loading them on thirty-five wagons and drays started for Fort McHenry over some of the identical streets where the Massachusetts soldiers had been murdered by the mob. It was late when this long procession got under way; large crowds collected, and riotous demonstrations of a threatening character were made at several points. Fortunately, the police gave efficient assistance, and unnecessary sacrifice of life was averted.

Coincident with this, the Union cause gained another signal advantage in Maryland. Governor Hicks's courage had risen with the ebb of disloyalty throughout the State; and as soon as the Legislature was adjourned he issued his proclamation calling into the service of the United States the four regiments he originally promised under the President's requisition. These were rapidly formed, and became a part of the Union army under a new call. Amidst such fluctuations the more belligerent Maryland rebels also formed companies and went South—some to Richmond, some to the rebel camp at Harper's Ferry; but the fraction of military aid which Maryland gave to the rebellion rose to no special significance.

Out of these transactions, however, there arose a noteworthy judicial incident. A man named John Merryman, found recruiting as a lieutenant for one of these rebel companies, was arrested (May 25) and imprisoned in Fort McHenry. Chief-Justice Taney, then in Baltimore, being applied to, issued a writ of *habeas corpus* to bring the prisoner before him. General George Cadwalader, at this time in command, made a respectful reply to the writ, alleging Merryman's treason, and stating fur-

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Samuel
Tyler, "Memoir of R.
B. Taney,"
pp. 640-642

ther that the President had authorized him to suspend the writ in such cases; and requested the Chief-Justice to postpone further action till the matter could be referred to the President.

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Tyler, "Memoir of R. B. Taney," pp 643, 644

The Chief-Justice immediately ordered an attachment to issue against General Cadwalader for contempt; upon which the marshal made return that he was unable to serve it, being denied entrance to Fort McHenry. Thereupon the Chief-Justice admitted the existence of a superior military force, but declared "that the President, under the Constitution of the United States, cannot suspend the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus*, nor authorize a military officer to do it," and that Merryman ought therefore to be immediately discharged; and went on to say "that he should cause his opinion when filed, and all the proceedings, to be laid before the President, in order that he might perform his constitutional duty to enforce the laws by securing obedience to the process of the United States." To this general purport the Chief-Justice filed his written opinion on the 1st of June, and caused a copy to be transmitted to the President. Of that opinion it will not be irrelevant to quote the criticism of one of the profoundest and most impartial jurists of that day:

Ibid, pp 646-659

Chief-Justice Taney's opinion in Merryman's case is not an authority. This, of course, is said in the judicial sense. But it is not even an argument, in the full sense. He does not argue the question from the language of the clause, nor from the history of the clause, nor from the principles of the Constitution, except by an elaborate depreciation of the President's office, even to the extent of making him, as Commander-in-Chief of the Army, called from the States into the service of the United States, no

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HORACE
BINNEY,
"The Privi-
lege of the
Writ of
Habeas
Corpus"
Part I,
p 36

more than an assistant to the marshal's posse — the deepest plunge of judicial rhetoric. The opinion, moreover, has a tone, not to say a ring, of disaffection to the President, and to the Northern and Western side of his house, which is not comfortable to suppose in the person who fills the central seat of impersonal justice

To this estimate of the spirit of Chief-Justice Taney's view we may properly add President Lincoln's own official answer to its substance. No attention was of course paid to the transmitted papers; but the President at the time of their receipt was engaged in preparing his message to the coming special session of Congress, and in that document he presented the justification of his act. The original draft of the message, in Lincoln's autograph manuscript, thus defines the executive authority with that force of statement and strength of phraseology of which he was so consummate a master:

Soon after the first call for militia, I felt it my duty to authorize the commanding general, in proper cases, according to his discretion, to suspend the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus* — or, in other words, to arrest and detain, without resort to the ordinary processes and forms of law, such individuals as he might deem dangerous to the public safety. At my verbal request, as well as by the general's own inclination, this authority has been exercised but very sparingly. Nevertheless, the legality and propriety of what has been done under it are questioned, and I have been reminded from a high quarter that one who is sworn to "take care that the laws be faithfully executed" should not himself be one to violate them. Of course I gave some consideration to the questions of power and propriety before I acted in this matter. The whole of the laws which I was sworn to take care that they be faithfully executed were being resisted, and failing to be executed, in nearly one-third of the

States Must I have allowed them to finally fail of execution, even had it been perfectly clear that by the use of the means necessary to their execution some single law, made in such extreme tenderness of the citizen's liberty, that practically it relieves more of the guilty than the innocent, should, to a very limited extent, be violated? To state the question more directly, are all the laws but one to go unexecuted, and the Government itself go to pieces, lest that one be violated? Even in such a case I should consider my official oath broken, if I should allow the Government to be overthrown, when I might think the disregarding the single law would tend to preserve it. But in this case I was not, in my own judgment, driven to this ground. In my opinion, I violated no law. The provision of the Constitution that "The privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus* shall not be suspended unless, when, in cases of rebellion or invasion, the public safety may require it," is equivalent to a provision — is a provision — that such privilege may be suspended when, in cases of rebellion or invasion, the public safety does require it. I decided that we have a case of rebellion, and that the public safety does require the qualified suspension of the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus*, which I authorized to be made. Now it is insisted that Congress, and not the Executive, is vested with this power. But the Constitution itself is silent as to which, or who, is to exercise the power; and as the provision plainly was made for a dangerous emergency, I cannot bring myself to believe that the framers of that instrument intended that in every case the danger should run its course until Congress could be called together, the very assembling of which might be prevented, as was intended in this case by the rebellion.

Lincoln,
Special
Message,
July 4, 1861
Autograph
MS of original
draft

The alterations and corrections from this first draft into the more impersonal form as finally sent to Congress and officially printed, but nowise changing its argument or substance, are also entirely in Lincoln's handwriting. That second and corrected form better befits the measured solemn-

CHAP VIII nity of a state paper. But in the language quoted above we seem brought into direct contact with the living workings of Lincoln's mind, and in this light the autograph original possesses a peculiar biographical interest and value.

CHAPTER IX

TEXAS

WHEN secession began, there were in the great State of Texas a total of 2445 United States soldiers. Their duty was to guard a frontier line of more than a thousand miles, partly along the border of Mexico, partly along the boundary of the Indian Territory. These troops were stationed in small detachments at eighteen different posts, widely scattered and difficult of access; the nearest being sixty, and the farthest 600 miles distant from San Antonio, the department headquarters. Brigadier-General David E. Twiggs, major-general by brevet, had returned to the Department of Texas and resumed command on November 27, 1860, reaching San Antonio December 8. Perhaps he was sent back by that subtle influence then in power at Washington, which placed so many officers of Southern birth and proclivities in stations of trust, where they might, as was no doubt hoped in certain contingencies they would, render passive or active help to the contemplated insurrection.

Twiggs soon gave evidence of his sympathy with the rebels. A two years' residence in New Orleans had probably imbued him with secession

CHAP IX

Waite,
Statement,
Feb 26, 1861.
W R Vol
I, p 524

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Twiggs to
Gen Scott,
Dec 13, 1860
W R Vol
I, p 579

notions and purposes. Nevertheless his convictions of soldierly duty and sense of military honor seem to have tempered his utterances and restrained his actions. About two weeks after he had assumed command by general orders, he wrote from headquarters at San Antonio to General Scott, predicting the secession of Texas, and asking instructions. The reply which the General-in-Chief felt compelled to send is another strong indictment of President Buchanan, for that want of patriotic vigilance and neglect of executive duty which everywhere permitted feeble rivulets of disloyalty to grow unchecked into active streams of treason, and finally to unite in a torrent of rebellion.

In cases of political disturbance, involving local conflict with the authority of the General Government, the General-in-Chief considers that the military questions, such as you suggest, contain a political element, with due regard to which, and in due deference to the chief executive authority, no extraordinary instructions concerning them must be issued without the consent of such authority. He has labored hard in suggesting and urging proper measures to vindicate the laws and protect the property of the United States, without waging war or acting offensively against any State or community. All such suggestions, though long since made in good time to have been peaceably and efficiently carried out, have failed to secure the favorable attention of the Government.

Gen Scott,
by Lay, to
Twiggs,
Dec 28, 1860
W R Vol
I, pp 579,
580

Scott concluded by commending affairs to "your discretion, firmness, and patriotism"; but these proved a poor reliance. Still Twiggs did not rush eagerly into treason. Four times after this he called attention to the coming danger. He declared that he was a Southern man; that all he had was in the South; that he must follow Geor-

gia out of the Union; and asked to be relieved of his command before the 4th of March. Had he been patriotic instead of disloyal, or had President Buchanan sent a faithful and energetic officer to replace him, the current of events might have been greatly modified. The political elements of Texas were somewhat antagonistic. In pro-slavery sentiment, in a spirit of adventure peculiar to frontier States, and in the extensive organization of secret societies known as "Knights of the Golden Circle," secession found, as elsewhere, a favoring influence. On the other hand, the sparseness of population, the large infusion of German emigrants, and especially the determined opposition of the Governor, were serious impediments to disunion and revolt.

General Sam Houston, famous as the liberator of Texas, was Governor. Though pro-slavery in sentiment, he had no sympathy with the Southern cliques which now plotted the destruction of the great Government to which he had linked the fortune of the Lone Star State. A sagacious and resolute leader in former revolutions, this new crisis paralyzed him with a divided purpose and a misguided ambition. Opposing secession, he either dared not or desired not to defend the Union, but shaped his plans to bring about an independent local revolution, which should erect Texas into a separate nation, to be enlarged and strengthened by the subsequent conquest and annexation of Mexico. Replying to the invitation of the Alabama commissioner to join a Southern confederacy, he rebuked the theory and principle of secession, and said that the people of Texas "will

CHAP IX
 Twiggs to
 Gen. Scott,
 Jan 15, 1861
 W. R. Vol
 I, p 581

CHAP IX

Houston to
Calhoun,
Jan 7, 1861
Texas
"House
Journal,"
p 39

prefer a separate nationality to even an equal position in a confederacy which may be broken and destroyed at any moment by the caprice or dissatisfaction of one of its members. Texas has views of expansion not common to many of her sister States. Although an empire within herself, she feels that there is an empire beyond, essential to her security. She will not be content to have the path of her destiny clogged. The same spirit of enterprise which founded a republic here, will carry her institutions southward and westward."

Under favoring conditions this bold and daring conception might perhaps have been a dazzling lure for the restive elements of Southern communities which had hitherto spent their force in filibustering enterprises, offering proportionately fewer rewards and encountering vastly greater hazards. But a little reflection ought to have shown him that this Southern and Western empire was precisely the object at which the "Confederate" conspiracy was grasping, and that in attempting to interpose between it and the power of the Union he, like the border States, was placing himself in the path of certain destruction. The Governor's intrigue being passive, and secession active and audaciously aggressive, he gradually but steadily lost ground. At first he refused to call together the Texas Legislature, but the conspirators set on foot a revolutionary State convention. Under an entirely illegal and irresponsible call self-constituted committees appointed time and place for an election at which polls were opened on request of any five citizens. Such an election was of course utterly without authority, underwent no scrutiny

and imposed no obligation, either on candidates or on voters present or absent. Nearly half the counties in the State were unrepresented, and those which acted, in many cases sent delegates upon insignificant and farcical minority votes.

Houston was at length constrained to convene the Legislature in extra session, and in a message, while declaring that the election of Lincoln was no cause for secession, and that there could be no middle ground between constitutional remedies and anarchy, nevertheless proposed that the people should express their will at the ballot-box, and that he would not oppose a convention. The Legislature had, however, so far slipped from his grasp as to pass a joint resolution "that the government of the State of Texas hereby gives its assent to and approves" the convention, which had been so irregularly and illegally called. Houston, probably seeing no other way out of his dilemma, formally approved this resolution, "with a protest against the assumption of any powers on the part of said convention beyond the reference of the question of a longer connection of Texas with the Union to the people." The convention, which had meanwhile assembled, did not even wait for the Governor's approval. On the 1st of February it passed an ordinance of secession, appointing the 23d of that month for its submission to popular vote in the State. As in Virginia, this was the merest pretense of an appeal to the people. With perfect predetermination, the convention proceeded to appoint delegates to the Montgomery Congress, and took secret steps to effect a revolutionary seizure of military control.

CHAP IX

"Annual
Cyclopæ-
dia," 1861,
p 688

Houston,
Message,
Jan 21, 1861
Texas
"House
Journal,"
pp 11 *et*
seq

Joint Reso-
lution, Jan
26, 1861
Texas
"House
Journal,"
pp 57-59

Approved
Feb 4, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 511

CHAP IX

Cooper,
Special Or-
ders, Jan
28, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 584

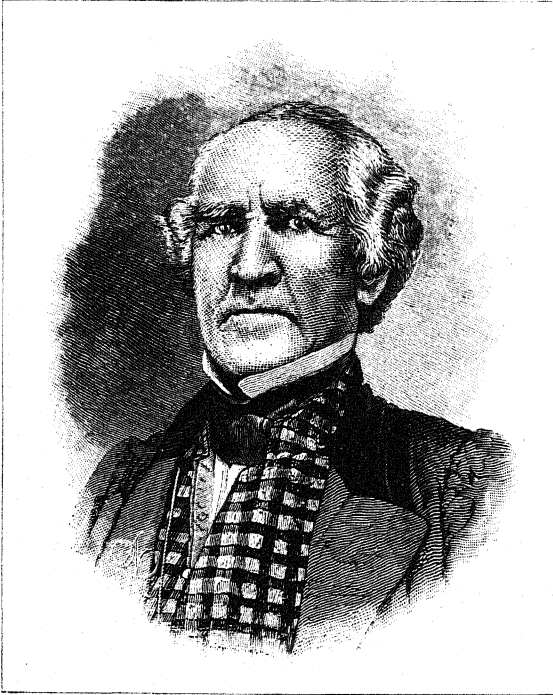
Thomas to
Twiggs,
Jan 31, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 585

Thomas to
Waite, Feb
15, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 589

Twiggs,
Special Or-
ders, Feb
9, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 504

The warnings and requests of General Twiggs had at length stirred the Washington authorities to action. By orders of January 28, Twiggs was relieved, and Colonel C. A. Waite placed in command of the Department of Texas. Five companies of artillery, stationed along the Rio Grande, were three days afterwards ordered to be withdrawn by sea, and were sent, some to Fort Jefferson at Tortugas, and Fort Taylor at Key West, and others ordered north to aid in the defense of Washington. As the political condition of Texas was daily growing more alarming, General Scott issued the following sweeping order to the new commander on February 15: "In the event of the secession of the State of Texas, the General-in-Chief directs that you will, without unnecessary delay, put in march for Fort Leavenworth [Kansas] the entire military force of your department. Preliminary thereto you will at once concentrate the troops in sufficient bodies to protect their march out of the country, at central points on the proper lines of march."

This order came fully two weeks too late. The convention had sent three commissioners to treat with General Twiggs for the surrender and evacuation of the military posts. He was already favorably disposed towards such an agreement, and on February 9 appointed a military commission "to transact such business as relates to the disposition of the public property upon the demand of the State of Texas." Negotiations were duly proceeding between these bodies when the change of command became known, and the Texas commissioners resolved on bolder measures. On the morning of



GENERAL SAM HOUSTON.

February 16, before daylight, the noted partisan leader, Ben McCulloch, appeared before the town of San Antonio, with some twelve to fifteen hundred hastily gathered rebel volunteers, and entered and took possession of the arsenal and the public store-houses. Backed by this force, the commissioners, at six o'clock in the morning, sent Twiggs a peremptory demand that he should deliver up all military posts and public property. He was in no mood to refuse and his two companies of regulars could have offered no successful resistance; so the official transfer was formally made.

Colonel Waite, the new commander, was yet sixty miles distant at Camp Verde, and did not reach San Antonio till February 19. When he arrived he found that General Twiggs had further agreed to withdraw the army by way of the coast, and had issued his orders for the movement. Colonel Waite's report says:

The troops in this department are stationed at different camps or posts in small garrisons, and spread over a very large extent of country. To concentrate a sufficient number to make a successful resistance, after the Texans had taken the field, was not practicable. Besides we had no large depot of provisions to move upon, and the means of transportation at the posts were so limited that the troops could have taken with them a supply for only a few days. An attempt to bring them together would have no doubt resulted in their being cut up in detail before they could get out of the country. Under these circumstances I felt it my duty to comply with the agreement entered into by General Twiggs, and remove the troops from the country as early as possible.

The election at which the secession ordinance was submitted was duly held (February 23) and

CHAP IX

Devine,
Maverick,
and Luckett
to Twiggs,
Feb 16, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 513

Twiggs,
General Or-
ders, Feb
18, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 515

Waite,
General Or-
ders, Feb
19, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 591

Waite to
Thomas,
Feb 26, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 521

CHAP IX the reported vote showed a large majority in its favor.¹ The result was announced in convention (March 4) and Texas declared to be free and independent. On the following day (March 5) the convention ratified the constitution of the provisional government of the Confederate States, and instructed its delegates (appointed prior to the popular vote on the secession ordinance) to apply for the admission of Texas. So much being done, it supposed its task to be finished, and sent a committee to Governor Houston to invite his adhesion. But this the Governor still stubbornly refused; replying (March 6) that "the convention was empowered only to submit the question of secession to the vote of the people. The convention performed the functions assigned to it by the Legislature, and in the opinion of the executive its powers were then exhausted." He added that it would be within the province of the Legislature to call a new convention with "authority to make such changes in the constitution of the State, as her present and future relations to the world at large may require." This position the Governor also further maintained in an answer which he instructed his Secretary of State to write (March 13) to the Confederate Secretary of War, who had at once claimed control of military operations. The Governor in firm language repudiated such control, resenting on behalf of the people of Texas "the course pursued in annexing them

Committee to Houston, Mar 5, 1861
"Annual Cyclopædia," 1861, p 689

Houston to Committee, Mar 6, 1861
"Annual Cyclopædia," 1861, p 689

¹ "The vote in 80 counties of the State was For secession, 34,794, against secession, 11,235 Majority for secession, 23,559 The vote at the Presidential election in November previous was Lincoln,—, Douglas, —, Breckinridge, 47,548; Bell, 15,438 "—"Annual Cyclopædia," 1861, p 689.

to a new Government without their knowledge or consent."

Bold words were, however, of little avail against bolder deeds of usurpation. The convention, disdaining any other authority than that afforded by the ragged regiment of Ben McCulloch, declined to be set aside. It passed an ordinance requiring State officers to appear in open convention at a designated hour to take an oath of allegiance to the Confederate States. Houston being notified, responded that he did not recognize the convention. At the appointed hour the name of Governor Sam Houston was called; but as he did not appear the Lieutenant-Governor came forward and took the prescribed oath. Another ordinance was at once adopted, "That the office of Governor of the State of Texas, by reason of the refusal of the late Governor Sam Houston to take the official oath, is vacant; and that the Lieutenant-Governor Edward Clark is hereby required and authorized to exercise the powers and authority," etc.

Against the action of the convention Governor Houston had nothing to oppose except an address to the people, which he published on the same day. He recited his many services, and reiterated his continued devotion to the Lone Star State. He denounced the convention as revolutionary and without the sanction of a majority of the people. He declared it would be impossible to enumerate all its usurpations, as a great part of its proceedings had been in secret; that while a portion of its appointed delegates were representing Texas in the Confederate Congress, two of them, still claiming to be United States Senators, continued to repre-

CHAP IX

Cave to
Walker,
Mar 13, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 613

New York
"Tribune,"
Mar 28, 1861

Ordinance,
Mar 16, 1861
New York
"Tribune,"
Mar 30, 1861

CHAP IX sent Texas in the United States Senate. The people, he said, had been transferred like sheep from the shambles; required to support a Constitution which ignored their very name, and render allegiance to a Government to which Texas had never been annexed. He protested against the act of the convention whose members were bound by no oath themselves, and who nevertheless declared his office vacant because he refused the oath they prescribed for him.

Gov Houston, Address, Mar 16, 1861
New York
"Tribune,"
April 1, 1861

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If he had adhered patriotically to the Union he might perhaps yet have found means to resist this usurpation of his official functions. Two weeks later (April 1) there arrived at the headquarters of Colonel Waite a messenger from Washington, bearing important dispatches from the Lincoln Administration. They contained the order of General Scott directing Colonel Waite, if he still had sufficient troops within call, to form immediately "a strongly intrenched camp at some suitable point convenient to and covering the post [and seaport] of Indianola, of not less than 500, but preferably of 1200 men, and hold the same against hostile Texans until further orders. . . The objects of the intrenched camp near Indianola," continued General Scott's letter, "are, first, to keep a foothold in that State till the question of secession on her part be definitely settled among her own people, and second, in case of conflict between them, to give such aid and support to General Houston or other head of authority in the defense of the Federal Government as may be within your power."

Gen Scott to Waite,
Mar 19, 1861
W R Vol I, pp 598,
599

The substance of this proffer of help was also communicated to Governor Houston by another

special messenger who went directly to Austin; but either the Governor had lost his courage, or was unwilling to compromise his scheme of Texan independence. He wrote to Colonel Waite declining the assistance of the United States Government, and protesting against the concentration of troops or fortifications in Texas. This refusal is the end of Houston's public career. Without aid he could no longer command sufficient popular support to maintain his authority against the local revolution. He was nearly seventy years old; and his advanced age was perhaps the underlying cause of his inability to ride and direct the new political storm.

CHAP IX

Houston
to Waite,
Mar. 29, 1861
W. E. Vol
I, p. 551

The orders from General Scott to tender aid to Governor Houston also instructed Colonel Waite that if there were no substantial Union party under the lead of Houston, or some other "executive authority of Texas," ready to defend the Federal authority by force of arms, he might consider as withdrawn the suggestion of forming an intrenched camp, and might proceed with the evacuation of the State. Colonel Waite, therefore, devoted his attention to this latter duty, and as rapidly as possible brought his different detachments from their stations towards Indianola to embark for the North.

In the nature of things this could only go on very slowly. Twiggs's capitulation had provided that the troops should retain their arms, and the artillery companies their guns; but the quartermaster's property being turned over to the commissioners, they had the control of all means of transportation, and these they were in no haste to

CHAP IX place at the service of the commanding officer. At the moment they had no great love for the United States army. Much as had been yielded to the conspirators, they desired and expected a great deal more. Because a few officers were ready to desert their flag and forfeit their honor, they assumed that the whole army in Texas would go over to the service of the rebellion "Would prefer your going to Texas and securing the United States troops for our army," telegraphed the rebel Secretary of War to Colonel Earl Van Dorn, who after conferring with two officers whose allegiance was as frail as his own, wrote back: "I think I shall have no difficulty in securing many of the troops and officers." The result did not confirm his sanguine expectations. Excepting General Twiggs and half a dozen others of insignificant rank and influence, officers and soldiers remained true to their flag, notwithstanding the fact, as reported by the commander, that "the most flattering inducements were held out by agents of the Confederate States for them to resign and enter that service."

Walker to
Van Dorn,
Mar 16, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 613

Van Dorn
to Walker,
Mar 26, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 615

Waite to
Townsend,
May 25, 1861
W R Vol
I, p. 553.

Cooper to
Van Dorn,
Apr 13, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 624

The lapse of a few weeks brought matters to a crisis. Sumter had no sooner fallen than dispatches went from Montgomery to Van Dorn directing him to "arrest and seize all troops and stores of the United States *in transitu* or otherwise, wherever found in the State of Texas." Before this order could be executed, the greater part of the troops had sailed. Only about seven hundred remained in the State. One detachment of these was at Indianola ready to embark; but being delayed by the non-arrival of the transport and the prevalence of bad weather, the commanding officer

made praiseworthy efforts to take them to a Mexican port in schooners. Before they could put to sea, however, Van Dorn appeared with three steamers, containing triple their number of Texans, and compelled their surrender, afterwards allowing them to proceed northward on parole. About the same time Colonel Waite and his headquarters staff at San Antonio were made prisoners. The last detachment, pursuing its march to the coast, was similarly confronted by overwhelming numbers at San Lucas Springs, brought to surrender and held as close prisoners of war. Thus before the middle of May the whole of Texas was firmly in the military grasp of Jefferson Davis. Long before the happening of the later events here narrated, President Buchanan, being yet in authority when information reached Washington, dismissed General Twiggs from the army of the United States "for his treachery to the flag of his country."

CHAP IX

Sibley to
Thomas,
April 25
and June
3, 1861

W R Vol
I, pp 562-
564

Waite to
Townsend,
May 25, 1861
W R Vol
I, pp 552,
553

Reeve to
Thomas,
May 12, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 568

Holt, Gen-
eral Orders,
Mar 1, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 597

CHAPTER X

THE OHIO LINE

CHAP. X 1861 **T**HE American rebellion cannot be studied without constantly bearing in mind the immense geographical area of the United States. From the Alleghany mountains to the Mississippi River, across a territorial breadth of nine degrees of longitude, runs the Ohio River in a south-westerly course; beginning at Pittsburgh among the western spurs of the Alleghanies and ending at Cairo, where it empties itself into the Mississippi. The Ohio is both a great political and commercial factor; for almost a thousand miles it was then the dividing line between free and slave States and on its banks at intervals the cities of Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania, Wheeling in Virginia, Cincinnati in Ohio, Louisville in Kentucky, Evansville in Indiana, and Cairo in Illinois, gathered for it, notwithstanding the competition of railroads, a heavy tribute of commerce from six of the principal Western States. At Cairo, the thousand miles of navigation of the Ohio are joined to another thousand miles of navigation southward to New Orleans, and an additional thousand northward on the Mississippi to St. Paul, not to mention the Missouri River and various other tributaries.



RICHARD YATES.



OLIVER P. MORTON.

Cairo, therefore, where the Ohio joins the Mississippi, is the military key of the Mississippi Valley, so far as that may be said of any interior point. In relation to the civil war it was doubly so, not merely because it controlled such a vast net-work of navigation, but because it lay on the extreme southern point of the free State of Illinois, running like a dividing wedge deep between the slave States of Kentucky and Missouri. Cairo was also the terminus of the Illinois Central Railroad, giving it a direct northern connection with Chicago. Being in addition the point nearest of any in the free States to New Orleans, it had unequaled advantages as a base for military operations against the South.

That the people of the Mississippi Valley shared the prevailing excitement over the rebellion, needs hardly to be repeated; it is sufficiently indicated in the insulting replies of the slave State Governors, and the patriotic responses of the "War Governors" from the free States in that section to the President's proclamation. With Virginia in secession, and Kentucky setting up the pretense of armed neutrality, the Ohio line became at once a quasi-military frontier, and the river commerce, with its advantages and risks, was instantly an object of paramount solicitude to the great cities of Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, and Louisville, and in relative measure to all the border States on both sides.

Illinois, holding the extreme right flank of the Ohio line, was neither unmindful of the importance of Cairo, nor forgetful of her patriotic pride as Lincoln's home State. Lincoln on his part did

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Cameron
to Yates,
Apl 19, 1861
Report of
the Adjutant-Gen-
eral of
Illinois

not lose sight of the loyalty of Illinois and the free West, nor the military value of its great river system. No sooner had disloyalty in the border slave States shown itself in the contumacious answers of their Governors than a dispatch went from the Secretary of War to the Governor of Illinois: "As soon as enough of your troops are mustered into service, send a brigadier-general with four regiments to or near Cairo."

Yates to
Swift,
Apl 19, 1861
Report of
the Adjutant-Gen-
eral of
Illinois

Governor Yates had no organized and equipped regiments of State militia. There were in the principal cities and towns of Illinois some scattering and slender volunteer companies of young men organized for holiday parades; perhaps five hundred stands of miscellaneous arms in the State arsenal, and one man holding an antiquated commission of brigadier-general. But he lived in Chicago, and had practical Western ideas and habits. Governor Yates immediately telegraphed General Swift: "As quick as possible have as strong a force as you can raise, armed and equipped with ammunition and accouterments, and a company of artillery ready to march at a moment's warning. A messenger will start to Chicago to-night."

The official report shows that at eleven o'clock on the 21st, only forty hours after the Governor's summons, General Swift started from Chicago with a force of 595 men and four six-pounder pieces of artillery. "This expedition," continues the report, "indifferently armed with rifles, shot-guns, muskets, and carbines, hastily gathered from stores and shops in Chicago, arrived at Big Muddy Bridge on the Illinois Central Railroad at five o'clock A. M., April 22, and detaching Captain

Harding's company at that point, arrived at Cairo at eight o'clock the following morning. The batteries were unprovided with shot, shell, or canister, but slugs hurriedly prepared — and some of which were used at a critical time and with terrible effect by one of these batteries at Fort Donelson — answered the purpose of all." Next day, April 24, three other batteries from northern Illinois were added to the expedition; and seven newly organized companies from Springfield also reached Cairo, under Colonel Benjamin M. Prentiss, a gallant volunteer officer, who had served in Mexico, and who assumed command.

These troops found a field for immediate usefulness at Cairo. At the very beginning the rebels were forced to lament and endeavor to repair their want of foresight and preparation for war. "Consult with merchants in Alexandria as to the feasibility of obtaining bacon from Ohio or Kentucky," wrote General Lee from Richmond, April 24. On the same day Governor Pickens telegraphed from Charleston to the rebel Secretary of War, "I desire to send an agent to St. Louis and Louisville to make large purchases of provisions." Walker responded that "an agent has been sent to St. Louis and Louisville to make purchases for the army" Other purchasers, it seems, were also in the field, for that day Governor Yates telegraphed from Springfield to Colonel Prentiss at Cairo: "The steamers *C. E. Hillman* and *John D. Perry* are about to leave St. Louis with arms and munitions. Stop said boats and seize all the arms and munitions."

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The orders were duly executed, and Governor Yates, who had given them on his own responsi-

CHAP X

1861.

bility as Commander-in-Chief for Illinois, reported his action to Washington. "We have directed the officer in command at Cairo," he wrote, "to seize munitions of war passing that point, but have not yet assumed the responsibility of preventing commercial intercourse." Under date of April 29 there came to the President a letter from Governor Harris of Tennessee complaining of the seizure, and asking whether it was by authority, to which Mr. Lincoln prepared the following reply :

SIR Yours of the 29th ultimo calling my attention to the supposed seizure near Cairo, Illinois, of the steamboat *C. E. Hillman*, and claiming that the said boat and its cargo are the property of the State of Tennessee and her citizens, and demanding to know whether the seizure was made by the authority of this Government or is approved by it, is duly received. In answer, I have to say this Government has no official information of such seizure ; but assuming that the seizure was made, and that the cargo consisted chiefly of munitions of war owned by the State of Tennessee, and passing into the control of its Governor, this Government avows the seizure for the following reasons :

A legal call was recently made upon the said Governor of Tennessee to furnish a quota of militia to suppress an insurrection against the United States, which call said Governor responded to by a refusal couched in disrespectful and malicious language. This Government therefore infers that munitions of war passing into the hands of said Governor are intended to be used against the United States ; and the Government will not indulge the weakness of allowing it, so long as it is in its power to prevent This Government will not at present question, but that the State of Tennessee by a majority of its citizens is loyal to the Federal Union, and the Government holds itself responsible in damages for all injuries it may do to any one who may prove to be such.

Lincoln,
Draft of a
Letter to
the Gov-
ernor of
Tennessee,
May, 1861
MS

This letter by Lincoln, owing to more pressing occupations, was never signed or sent; but it shows us his feeling and intention, and it is specially characteristic for the ready discernment with which it draws the distinction between the insurrectionary course of Governor Harris, the legal attitude of the State of Tennessee, and the rights of loyal Tennesseans.

CHAP X

The occupation of Cairo created great excitement in the adjacent South and indignation among the rebels whose schemes it interrupted; hasty telegrams went from them to Montgomery announcing the event and suggesting remedies, defense, and retaliation. An incautious Kentucky State Senator, resident at Paducah, forgetting that Paducah was in the State of Kentucky and Cairo in the State of Illinois, wrote a letter of protest to Lincoln on the subject, and to this disciple of States Rights and armed neutrality the President returned a reply of good-natured irony. Under his direction one of his secretaries wrote: "The President directs me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th ultimo, protesting against the stationing of United States troops at Cairo. He directs me to say that the views so ably stated by you shall have due consideration, and to assure you that he would never have ordered the movement of troops complained of had he known that Cairo was in your Senatorial district."

Hay to
Johnson,
May 6, 1861.
MS

Of scarcely less immediate interest to the authorities and people of Illinois than the occupation of Cairo, was the safety of the United States arsenal at St. Louis, Missouri. It had been and was then more than ever in jeopardy from the secession

CHAP X

Lyon to
Yates,
Apr 16, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 687

intrigues for its capture, which will be more fully related in another chapter. Governor Richard Yates needed arms for the volunteers that were gathering at his call. He made application for them to General William S. Harney at St. Louis, who, probably from habit of routine and over-caution, refused them. Captain Nathaniel Lyon, his subordinate, readier to act in revolutionary emergencies, recommended a large transfer to Illinois. Governor Yates hurried off a messenger with Lyon's official recommendation and his own requisition for 10,000 stands of arms, who arrived in Washington on Saturday, April 20, the day following the Baltimore riot. He brought letters which sustained and confirmed Lyon's recommendation. The President, with the concurrence of Secretary Cameron and General Scott, directed that Governor Yates should have the arms; that Harney should be relieved, and that three Illinois regiments should be sent to reenforce the arsenal

The messenger who had come through Baltimore that Saturday morning went back through the turbulent city the same evening, bearing on his person papers which had they been discovered would have insured him short shrift at the first lamp-post. In two days more the order was in Governor Yates's hands; but then came the dilemma how to transport the arms without exciting a secession riot to capture the arsenal. There is not room here to relate the well-planned devices to lull the suspicion and elude the attention of the St. Louis rebels. On April 25, at midnight, 10,000 stands of arms in boxes were loaded on a river steamer; and as the time seemed favorable, and the remaining

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arms were in evident danger, Captain James H. Stokes of Chicago, who was managing the removal, asked permission "to empty the arsenal." Captain Lyon bravely took the responsibility, and 11,000 additional stands of arms, together with quantities of ammunition and equipments, were transferred to the boat, and a company of Missouri volunteers went aboard as a guard. There was a moment of consternation when the steamer was found to be aground with overweight, and the night hours were rapidly slipping away; but the moving of some two hundred boxes to the stern lightened the bow so that the steamer could back off into deep water. Then followed a laconic dialogue between the captain of the boat and the officer in charge. "Which way?" "Straight to Alton in the regular channel." "What if we are attacked?" "Then we will fight." "What if we are overpowered?" "Run her to the deepest part of the river and sink her." But the precautions had been well taken, and so heroic a sacrifice did not become necessary.

By early dawn of April 26 the steamer touched the wharf at Alton, Illinois, twenty-five miles above St. Louis, where a railroad train stood waiting. The city fire-bell was rung, and as the startled citizens assembled, volunteer working-parties were formed to carry the heavy boxes to the cars; in a couple of hours "the train moved off, amid their enthusiastic cheers, for Springfield" Governor Yates's report of the transaction was brief and business-like. "We this day received from the St. Louis arsenal 21,000 stands of arms, and 110,000 musket cartridges, and two field-pieces

CHAP X

Yates to
Cameron,
Apr 28, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
140

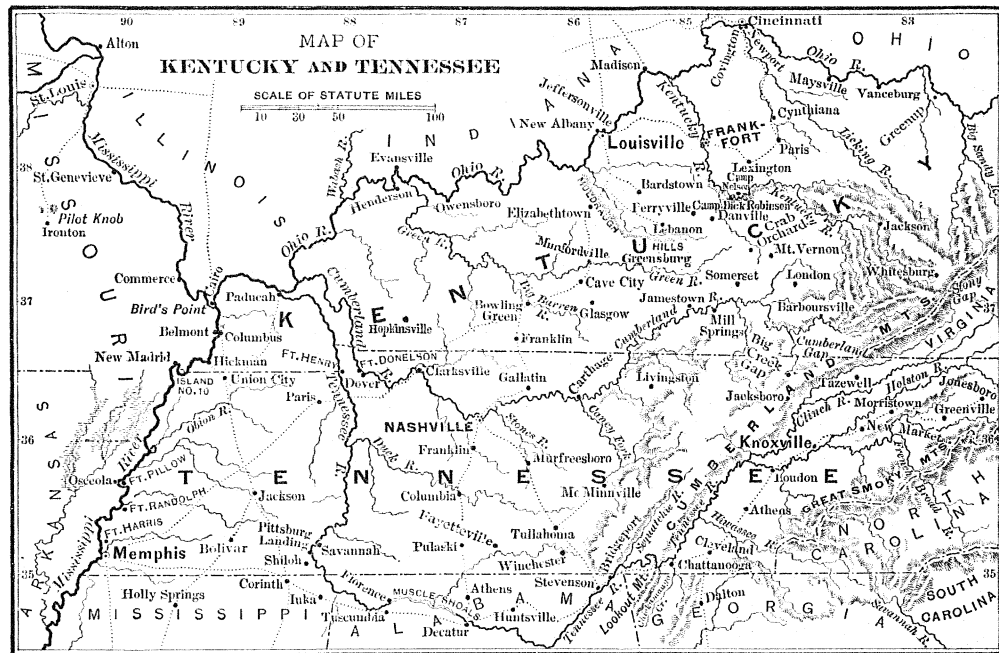
all complete. There are left there 8000 stands of arms."

Townsend
to the Com-
manding
Officer,
May 2, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
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The transition from peace to war along the Ohio line did not fail to produce numberless inconveniences and embarrassments which were greatly complicated by the uncertain sentiment and hesitating attitude of Kentucky. Desiring to treat this State with all tenderness and consideration, General Scott telegraphed on May 2, "It is deemed inexpedient, because irritating to Kentucky and other States bordering on the Ohio, to detain cargoes of provisions descending the rivers from those States." To this the officer at Cairo replied, "No boats have been searched unless I had been previously and reliably informed that they had on board munitions of war destined to the enemies of the Government"; while Governor Oliver P Morton explained that citizens of Indiana were also anxious to take advantage of the brisk demand for their surplus products; but that such a commerce was simply a channel by which rebel armies in the South would be supplied. He suggested that trade should be cut off with all the States which had refused to furnish volunteers under the President's call. The urgent necessity of some such prohibition very soon became apparent; and on the 8th of May the positive orders of the Secretary of War were telegraphed that provisions must be stopped at Cairo.

Townsend
to McClel-
lan, May 8,
1861 W R
Series III,
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Meanwhile the military frontier, shaping itself much more slowly than east of the Alleghanies, yet so far took definite form that the Department of the Ohio (created on May 3), consisting of the States of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, was now form-



ally organized by General George B. McClellan, who assumed command about the middle of May, and who recommended a system of defense, for observation rather than for immediate action. He thought Cairo ought to be occupied with a heavy battery, two or three regiments, and three gunboats. "Governor Morton is anxious to establish batteries against Louisville. I cannot permit this at present; it would only serve to irritate. . . The moral effect of the presence of troops at Cairo, Evansville, and Camp Dennison [near Cincinnati] ought to be sufficient to reassure the Union men in Kentucky, although I confess that I think all our calculations should be based on the supposition that Kentucky will secede."

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McClellan
to Towns-
end, May
10, 1861
W. R.
Series III,
Vol. I, p.
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Before any suggestion came of the need of gunboats on the Western rivers the Government had taken measures to have them supplied. On the 16th of May Secretary Welles issued to Commander John Rodgers the following order: "You will proceed to Cincinnati, Ohio, or the headquarters of General McClellan, wherever they may be, and report to that officer in regard to the expediency of establishing a naval armament on the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, or either of them, with a view of blockading or interdicting communication and interchanges with the States that are in insurrection." Nor did the Government hesitate to set in action whatever agency or resource offered itself, which gave reasonable promise of success. Captain James B. Eads, then little known, but afterwards famous as a civil engineer, came from St. Louis to Washington, and being introduced by Attorney-General Bates to the President and Cab-

Welles to
Rodgers,
May 16, 1861.
W. R.
Series III,
Vol. I, p.
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met, laid before them his plans of war vessels for the Western rivers. He carried back with him the direction of Secretary Cameron, that the subject was referred "to General McClellan, who will consult with Mr. Eads and with such naval officers as the Navy Department may send out for that purpose, and then, as he shall find best, take order for the proper preparation of the boats."

Cameron,
Order, May
14, 1861 MS

The fact that the efforts of many leading Kentuckians committed that State to the doctrine of "armed neutrality," and the hollow pretense of maintaining this abnormal status, retarded the definition of the true military frontier and the development of military operations. General Simon B. Buckner, then in command of the militia of Kentucky and in the confidence and plans of her Governor, held two interviews with McClellan, one on the 8th and the second on the 13th of June, in which the subject was discussed at length. McClellan reports:

We differed entirely as to the position that Kentucky should assume in the present controversy. He regarded the State as the most loyal one in the Union. I considered his view of the status of Kentucky as inconsistent with true loyalty. In the course of the conversation Buckner voluntarily proffered me his word of honor that he would use all his influence to have Kentucky troops drive out any Confederate forces that might invade the State, and that if he did not possess the necessary power, he would take steps to have me called upon for assistance. To this I replied that the State authorities must be prompt in their call else they would find me there before it, as I would not stand on ceremony in such a case. This, General, is substantially the gist of the interview. I made no stipulations with Buckner, neither did I, directly nor by implication, recognize the neutrality of Kentucky

McClellan
to Gen
Scott, June
26, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
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So long as the disposition to carry out this promise in good faith continued, the duties of McClellan and succeeding Union commanders along that part of the Ohio line bordering on Kentucky were mainly advisory and administrative, and the local intercourse of that State with the North remained unbroken. Towards the close of the month of May McClellan's attention and active service were required on and beyond that part of the Ohio River bordering the then State of Virginia, now the State of West Virginia. At the western end of the Ohio line little took place except holding and strengthening Cairo and some adjacent points in order to make it a military depot and a principal base of supplies, while armies were being gathered and gun-boats built for the expected fall and winter campaigns. This comparative military idleness on the lower Ohio and the equivocal and uncertain attitude of Kentucky which sustained it were not destined to be of long continuance. The "neutrality" of that State was something to be respected by the rebellion only so long as it might hope to secure her adhesion. As early as July 4 the Richmond authorities created a military department embracing substantially the river counties of the lower Mississippi north of Red River and below Kentucky. To this command General Leonidas Polk, late a bishop, was assigned, with headquarters at Memphis, and to him was confided the duty of watching and opposing the progress of the Union armies from Cairo southward.

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All these preparations moved forward under incidental characteristics of confusion and delay that were extremely vexatious to both the Government

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and the public. To mobilize a hundred thousand soldiers is a task of magnitude even for nations working under military government and provided with standing armies. To expect that such a feat should be accomplished with system and order in a few weeks, by a nation having the merest skeleton of a regular army, where military traditions had nearly faded out, where the people were deeply absorbed in peaceful industries, would be to suppose impossibilities. Yet the stupendous undertaking found a practical if not an ideal accomplishment. Under the inspiring calls issued by the War Governors, volunteers were thronging to the great military camps, improvised not only by the States of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, but also by each of their North-western sisters. The great Pittsburgh foundries began to cast mortars and heavy guns; and though regiments were often sent to post or garrison in advance of arms and equipments, these were supplied at the earliest moment they could be obtained.

The military martinet, reviewing these incipient stages of the war of the rebellion, finds on every hand shortcomings to point out and irregularities to censure. We shall hear him frequently, prating of political generals, and building a sagacious after-criticism on the texts of Big Bethel and Bull Run. But the historian will see in these beginnings the sign of a prodigious popular movement, in whose spontaneous energy and persistent continuance early defects and missteps are but as bubbles on the surface of a mighty river. Of all the conflicting calls for arms, for equipments, for siege-guns and field-batteries, for gun-boats and transports,

for officers to muster-in regiments and perform staff duty, for supplies, for credit, for cash, only a fraction could be immediately supplied. Promises by the Government and the exercise of patience by the applicants were the only alternatives.

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CHAPTER XI

MISSOURI

CHAP XI **T**HE Governor of Missouri, Claiborne F. Jackson, was early engaged in the secession conspiracy, though, like other border-State executives, he successfully concealed his extreme designs from the public. There was an intolerant pro-slavery sentiment throughout the State; but it also had a positive and outspoken minority of strong anti-slavery citizens in a few localities, chiefly in the great commercial city of St. Louis. This minority was made up principally of its German residents and voters, numbering fully one-half the total population of the city, which in 1860 was 160,000. Here, in 1856, a young, talented, courageous leader and skillful politician, Francis P. Blair, Jr., though himself a slaveholder, had dared to advocate the doctrine and policy of gradual emancipation, and on that issue secured an election to Congress. The same issue repeated in 1858 brought him sufficiently near an election to entitle him to contest his opponent's seat.

In 1860 Blair and his followers, now fully acting with the Republican party, cast 17,028 votes for Lincoln, while the remaining votes in the State were divided as follows: Douglas, 58,801;

Bell, 58,372; Breckinridge, 31,317. Blair was again elected to Congress. The combined Lincoln, Douglas, and Bell vote showed an overwhelming Union majority; but the Governor elected by the Douglas plurality became a disunionist and secession conspirator. With Blair as a leader, and such an organized minority at his call, the intrigues of Governor Jackson to force Missouri into secession met from the outset many difficulties, notwithstanding the Governor's official powers, influential following, and the prevalent proslavery opinion of the State. The Legislature was sufficiently subservient; it contained a majority of radical secessionists, and only about fifteen unconditional Union members, but these were vigilant and active, and made the most of their minority influence.

The same general expedients resorted to in other States by the conspirators were used in Missouri—visits and speeches from Southern commissioners; messages and resolutions of "Southern" rights and sympathy, and strong enunciation of the doctrine of non-coercion; military bills and measures to arm and control the State; finally, a "sovereign" State Convention. Here they overshot their mark. A strong majority of Union members was elected. The convention met at Jefferson City, the State capital, adjourned to the healthier atmosphere of St. Louis, and by an outspoken report and decided votes condemned secession and took a recess till December following. The secession leaders, however, would not accept their popular defeat. In the interim Sumter fell, and Lincoln issued his call for troops. Governor Jackson, as we have seen, in-

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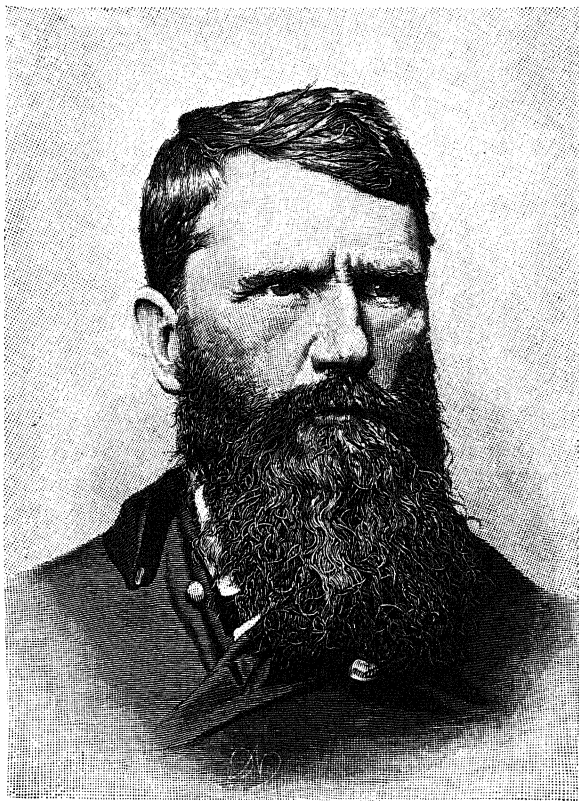
Feb 28, 1861

Mar 22, 1861

CHAP XI sultingly denounced the requisition as "illegal, unconstitutional, revolutionary, inhuman, and diabolical," and again convened his rebel Legislature in extra session to do the treasonable work which the "sovereign" Missouri Convention had so recently condemned.

1861 It was an essential feature of Governor Jackson's programme to obtain possession of the St. Louis arsenal, and as early as January he had well-nigh perfected his plot for its surrender to the State by a treacherous officer. But suspicion was aroused, the commandant changed, and the arsenal reenforced; by the middle of February the garrison had been increased to 488 regulars and recruits. In the mean time local intrigue was active. The secessionists organized bodies of "Minute men" to capture it, while the Union men with equal alertness formed a safety committee, and companies of Home Guards to join in its defense. These latter were largely drawn from the German part of the city, to which the arsenal lay contiguous, and their guardianship over it was direct and effective.

Lincoln was inaugurated, and making Montgomery Blair his postmaster-general and Edward Bates his attorney-general, Missouri had virtually two representatives in the Cabinet. Francis P. Blair, Jr., brother of Montgomery, therefore found no great difficulty in having the command of the arsenal given to Captain Nathaniel Lyon, not only a devoted soldier, but a man of thorough anti-slavery convictions. Lyon was eager to forestall the secession conspiracy by extensive preparation and swift repression; but the department com-



GENERAL FRANCIS P. BLAIR, JR.

mander, General William S. Harney, and the ordnance officer whom Lyon had displaced, both of more slow and cautious temper, and reflecting the local political conservatism, thwarted and hampered Lyon and Blair, who from the beginning acted in concert. No great difficulty grew out of this antagonism till the President's call for troops; then it created discussion, delay, want of cooperation. Blair could not get his volunteers mustered into service, and Governor Yates of Illinois could get no arms. The President finally grew impatient. Harney was relieved and called to Washington, and Lyon directed to muster-in and arm the four Missouri regiments of volunteers with all expedition, and to send the extra arms to Springfield, Illinois, while three Illinois regiments were ordered to St. Louis to assist in guarding the arsenal.

These orders were issued in Washington on April 20. By this time St. Louis, like the whole Union, was wrought up to high excitement, but public opinion was more evenly divided there than elsewhere. There were Union speeches and rebel speeches; cheers for Lincoln and cheers for Davis; Union headquarters and rebel headquarters. The antagonism quickly grew into armed organizations. The Unionists were mustered, armed, and drilled at the arsenal as United States volunteers. On the other hand Governor Jackson, having decided on revolution, formed at St. Louis a nominal camp of instruction under the State militia laws. The camp was established at Lindell's Grove, was christened "Camp Jackson," in honor of the Governor, and was commanded by Brigadier-General D. M. Frost, a West Point graduate. Two regiments quickly

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CHAP XI assembled, and a third was in process of formation. The flag of the United States still floated over the camp and many Unionists were in the ranks of the old holiday parade militia companies, but the whole leadership and animating motive were in aid of rebellion. It was already literally one of Jefferson Davis's outposts. As soon as Governor Jackson had avowed his treason, he dispatched two confidential agents to Montgomery to solicit arms and aid. Jefferson Davis wrote in reply:

Davis to
Jackson,
Apr 23, 1861
W R
Series IV,
Vol I, p 94

After learning as well as I could from the gentlemen accredited to me what was most needful for the attack on the arsenal, I have directed that Captains Green and Duke should be furnished with two 12-pounder howitzers and two 32-pounder guns, with the proper ammunition for each. These from the commanding hills will be effective, both against the garrison and to breach the inclosing walls of the place. I concur with you as to the great importance of capturing the arsenal and securing its supplies, rendered doubly important by the means taken to obstruct your commerce and render you unarmed victims of a hostile invasion. We look anxiously and hopefully for the day when the star of Missouri shall be added to the constellation of the Confederate States of America.

Walker to
Jackson,
Apr 26, 1861
W R
Series IV,
Vol I, pp
106, 107

In reality he regarded the "star" as already in the "constellation." Three days later the rebel Secretary of War wrote to the Governor: "Can you arm and equip one regiment of infantry for service in Virginia to rendezvous at Richmond? Transportation will be provided by this Government. The regiment to elect its own officers, and must enlist for not less than twelve months, unless sooner discharged." In face of the overwhelming Union sentiment of Missouri, so lately manifested by the action of the State Convention, Governor

Jackson was not prepared for so bold a proceeding, and therefore wrote in reply: CHAP XI

Yours of the 26th ultimo, via Louisville, is received. I have no legal authority to furnish the men you desire. Missouri, you know, is yet under the tyranny of Lincoln's Government—so far, at least, as forms go. We are woefully deficient here in arms and cannot furnish them at present, but so far as men are concerned we have plenty of them ready, willing, and anxious to march at any moment to the defense of the South. Our Legislature has just met, and I doubt not will give me all necessary authority over the matter. If you can arm the men they will go whenever wanted, and to any point where they may be most needed. I send this to Memphis by private hand, being afraid to trust our mails or telegraphs. Let me hear from you by the same means. Missouri can and will put 100,000 men in the field if required. We are using every means to arm our people, and until we are better prepared must move cautiously. I write this in confidence. With my prayers for your success, etc

Jackson to
Walker,
May 5, 1861
W R
Series IV,
Vol I, p
138

First to capture the arsenal and then to reenforce the armies of Jefferson Davis were doubtless the immediate objects of Camp Jackson. It would be a convenient nucleus which at the given signal would draw to itself similar elements from different parts of the State. Already the arsenal at Liberty—the same one from which arms were stolen to overawe Kansas in 1855—had been seized on April 20 and its contents appropriated by secessionists in western Missouri. Jeff M. Thompson had been for some weeks drilling a rebel camp at St. Joseph, and threatening the neighboring arsenal at Leavenworth. The Legislature was maturing a comprehensive military bill which would give the Governor power to concentrate and use these scattered fractions of regiments. Until this was passed, Camp

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CHAPTER XI Jackson had a lawful existence under the old militia laws. But the Union Safety Committee, and especially Mr. Blair and Captain Lyon, followed the Governor's intrigue at every step, and reporting the growing danger to Washington received from President Lincoln extraordinary powers to overcome it. An order to Captain Lyon read as follows :

Cameron
to Lyon,
Apl. 30, 1861
W. R. Vol
I, p. 675

The President of the United States directs that you enroll in the military service of the United States the loyal citizens of St. Louis and vicinity, not exceeding, with those heretofore enlisted, ten thousand in number, for the purpose of maintaining the authority of the United States for the protection of the peaceable inhabitants of Missouri, and you will, if deemed necessary for that purpose by yourself and by Messrs Oliver T. Filley, John How, James O. Broadhead, Samuel T. Glover, J. Witzig, and Francis P. Blair, Jr., proclaim martial law in the city of St. Louis.

It was upon this order, with certain additional details, that General Scott made the indorsement, "It is revolutionary times, and therefore I do not object to the irregularity of this."

The Union Safety Committee soon had indisputable evidence of the insurrectionary purposes and preparations. On the night of May 8, cannon, ammunition, and several hundred muskets, sent by Jefferson Davis, were landed at the St. Louis levee from a New Orleans steamer, and at once transferred to Camp Jackson. They had been brought from the arsenal at Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and were a part of the United States arms captured there in January by the Governor of that State. The proceeding did not escape the vigilance of the Safety Committee, but the material of war was allowed to go unobstructed to the camp. The next

day Captain Lyon visited Camp Jackson in disguise, and thus acquainting himself personally with its condition, strategical situation, and surroundings, matured his plan for its immediate capture. All legal obstacles which had been urged against such a summary proceeding were now removed by the actual presence in the camp of the hostile supplies brought from Baton Rouge.

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At two o'clock in the afternoon of May 10 a strong battalion of regulars with six pieces of artillery, four regiments of Missouri volunteers, and two regiments of Home Guards, all under command of Captain Lyon, were rapidly marching through different streets to Camp Jackson. Arrived there, it was but a moment's work to gain the appointed positions surrounding the camp, and to plant the batteries, ready for action, on commanding elevations. General Frost heard of their coming, and undertook to avert the blow by sending Lyon a letter denying that he or his command, or "any other part of the State forces," meant any hostility to the United States — though it was himself who had endeavored to corrupt the commandant of the arsenal in January, and who, in a letter to the Governor, had outlined and recommended these very military proceedings in Missouri, convening the Legislature, obtaining heavy guns from Baton Rouge, seizing the Liberty arsenal, and establishing this camp of instruction, expressly to oppose President Lincoln.

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Frost to
Jackson,
Jan. 24, 1861
Peckham,
"General
Nathaniel
Lyon," p
43

Ibid,
Apr. 15, 1861
Peckham,
"General
Nathaniel
Lyon,"
pp 147, 148

So far from being moved from his purpose, Lyon refused to receive Frost's letter; and, as soon as his regiments were posted, sent a written demand for the immediate surrender of Camp Jackson,

CHAP XI "with no other conditions than that all persons surrendering under this demand shall be humanely and kindly treated." The case presented no alternative; and seeing that he was dealing with a resolute man, Frost surrendered with the usual protest. Camp and property were taken in possession; arms were stacked, and preparation made to march the prisoners to the arsenal, where on the following day they were paroled and disbanded. Up to this time everything had proceeded without casualty, or even turbulent disorder; but an immense assemblage of the street populace followed the march and crowded about the camp. Most of them were peaceful spectators whose idle curiosity rendered them forgetful of danger; but among the number was the usual proportion of lawless city rowdies, of combative instincts, whose very nature impelled them to become the foremost elements of disorder and revolution. Many of them had rushed to the scene of expected conflict with such weapons as they could seize; and now as the homeward march began they pressed defiantly upon the troops, with cheers for Jefferson Davis and insults and bitter imprecations upon the soldiers.

It seems a fatality that when a city mob in anger and soldiers with loaded guns are by any circumstances thrown into close contact it produces the same incidents and results. There are insult and retort, a rush and a repulse; then comes a shower of missiles, finally a pistol-shot, and after it a return volley from the troops, followed by an irregular fusillade from both sides. Who began it, or how it was done, can never be ascertained. It so happened on this occasion, both at the head and

rear of the marching column and during a momentary halt; and, as usual, the guilty escaped, and innocent men, women, and children fell in their blood, while the crowd fled pell-mell in mortal terror. Two or three soldiers and some fifteen citizens were killed and many wounded. CHAP XI

As in Baltimore, the event threw St. Louis into the excitement of a general riot. Gun stores were broken into and newspaper offices threatened; but the police checked the outbreak, though public tranquillity and safety were not entirely restored for several days. Aside from its otherwise deplorable results, the riot produced, or rather magnified, a military and political complication. On the day after the capture of Camp Jackson, General Harney returned from Washington, and once more assumed command. His journey had been eventful. Arrested by the rebels at Harper's Ferry, he had been sent to Richmond; there the authorities, anxious to win him over to secession by kindness, set him at liberty. Proof against their blandishments, however, he merely thanked them for their courtesy, and, loyal soldier as he was, proceeded to his superiors and his duty at Washington. This circumstance greatly aided his explanations and excuses before General Scott, President Lincoln, and the Cabinet, and secured his restoration as Department Commander.

But his return to St. Louis proved ill timed. His arrival there in the midst of the excitement over the capture of Camp Jackson and the riot emphasized and augmented the antagonism between the radical Unionists, led by Blair and Lyon, and the pro-slavery and conservative Unionists, who now MAY 11, 1861

CHAP XI made the general their rallying point. Paying too much attention to the complaints and relying too blindly upon the false representations and promises of secession conspirators like Frost, and greatly underrating the active elements of rebellion in Missouri, Harney looked coldly upon the volunteers and talked of disbanding the Home Guards. This brought him into conflict with the Union Safety Committee and President Lincoln's orders. Delegations of equally influential citizens representing both sides went to Washington, in a stubborn mistrust of each other's motives. In their appeal to Lincoln, Lyon's friends found a ready advocate in Mr. Blair, Postmaster-General, and Harney's friends in Mr. Bates, the Attorney-General; and the Missouri discord was thus in a certain degree, and at a very early date, transplanted into the Cabinet itself. The local embitterment in St. Louis beginning then ran on for several years, and in its varying and shifting phases gave the President no end of trouble in his endeavor from first to last to be just to each faction.

Harney was strongly intrenched in the personal friendship of General Scott; besides, he was greatly superior in army rank, being a brigadier-general, while Lyon was only a captain. On the other hand, Lyon's capture of Camp Jackson had shown his energy, courage, and usefulness, and had given him great popular applause. Immediately to supersede him seemed like a public censure. It was one of the many cases where unforeseen circumstances created a dilemma, involving irritated personal susceptibilities and delicate questions of public expediency. President Lincoln took action promptly

and firmly, though tempered with that forbearance by which he was so constantly enabled to extract the greatest advantage out of the most perplexing complications. The delegations from Missouri with their letters arrived on May 16, a week after the Camp Jackson affair. Having heard both sides, Lincoln decided that in any event Lyon must be sustained. He therefore ordered that Harney should be relieved, and that Lyon be made a brigadier-general of volunteers. In order, however, that this change might not fall too harshly, Lincoln did not make his decision public, but wrote confidentially to Frank Blair, under date of May 18:

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MY DEAR SIR: We have a good deal of anxiety here about St Louis. I understand an order has gone from the War Department to you, to be delivered or withheld in your discretion, relieving General Harney from his command. I was not quite satisfied with the order when it was made, though on the whole I thought it best to make it; but since then I have become more doubtful of its propriety. I do not write now to countermand it, but to say I wish you would withhold it, unless in your judgment the necessity to the contrary is very urgent. There are several reasons for this. We had better have him a friend than an enemy. It will dissatisfy a good many who otherwise would be quiet. More than all, we first relieve him, then restore him, and now if we relieve him again the public will ask, "Why all this vacillation?" Still, if in your judgment it is indispensable, let it be so.

Upon receipt of this letter both Blair and Lyon, with commendable prudence, determined to carry out the President's suggestion. Since Harney's return from Washington his words and acts had been more in conformity with their own policy. He had published a proclamation defending and justifying

CHAP XI the capture of Camp Jackson, and declaring that "Missouri must share the destiny of the Union," and that the whole power of the United States would be exerted to maintain her in it. Especially was the proclamation unsparing in its denunciation of the recent military bill of the rebel Legislature.

This bill cannot be regarded in any other light than an indirect secession ordinance, ignoring even the forms resorted to by other States. Manifestly its most material provisions are in conflict with the Constitution and laws of the United States. To this extent it is a nullity, and cannot, and ought not to, be upheld. Within the field and scope of my command and authority the supreme law of the land must and shall be maintained, and no subterfuges, whether in the forms of legislative acts or otherwise, can be permitted to harass or oppress the good and law-abiding people of Missouri. I shall exert my authority to protect their persons and property from violations of every kind, and I shall deem it my duty to suppress all unlawful combinations of men, whether formed under pretext of military organizations, or otherwise.

Harney,
Proclamation, May
14, 1861
W R Vol
III, pp 371,
372

He also suggested to the War Department the enlistment of Home Guards and the need of additional troops in Missouri. So far as mere theory and intention could go, all this was without fault. There can be no question of Harney's entire loyalty, and of his skill and courage as a soldier dealing with open enemies. Unfortunately, he did not possess the adroitness and daring necessary to circumvent the secret machinations of traitors. Governor Jackson, on the contrary, seems to have belonged to the race of conspirators. He and his rebel Legislature, convened in special session at Jefferson City, were panic-stricken by the news of the capture of Camp Jackson. On that night of May 10 the Gov-

ernor, still claiming and wielding the executive power of the State, sent a train to destroy the telegraph and to burn the railroad bridge over the Osage River, in order to keep the bayonets of Lyon and Blair at a safe distance. At night the Legislature met for business, the secession members belted with pistols and bowie-knives, with guns lying across their desks or leaning against chans and walls, while sentinels and soldiers filled the corridors and approaches.

CHAP XI
May 10, 1861

The city was in an uproar of alarms and apprehension; the young ladies of the female seminary and many families were moved across the river for security. Until late into the night the secession Governor and his secession majority hurried their treasonable legislation through the mere machinery of parliamentary forms. It was under these conditions that the famous military bill and kindred acts were passed. It appropriated three millions of dollars; authorized the issue of bonds; diverted the school fund; anticipated two years' taxes; made the governor a military dictator, and ignored the Federal Government. It was in truth, as Harney called it, "an indirect secession ordinance." Armed with these revolutionary enactments, but still parading his State authority, Governor Jackson cautiously attempted to consolidate his military power. Ex-Governor Sterling Price was appointed Major-General commanding the Missouri State Guard, who more conveniently to cloak the whole conspiracy sought an interview with General Harney, and entered with him into a public agreement, vague and general in its terms, "of restoring peace and good order to the people of the State in sub-

Peckham,
"General
Nathaniel
Lyon," pp
168-178

CHAP XI ordination to the laws of the General and State governments ”

Price-
Harney
Agreement,
May 21, 1861
W R Vol
III, p 375

General Price, having by commission full authority over the militia of the State of Missouri, undertakes, with the sanction of the Governor of the State, already declared, to direct the whole power of the State officers to maintain order within the State among the people thereof, and General Harney publicly declares that, this object being thus assured, he can have no occasion, as he has no wish, to make military movements which might otherwise create excitements and jealousies, which he most earnestly desires to avoid

Harney to
Price,
May 27, 1861
W R Vol
III, pp 379,
380

Blinded and lulled by treacherous professions, Harney failed to see that this was evading the issue and committing the flock to the care of the wolf. Price's undertaking to "maintain order" was, in fact, nothing else than the organization of rebel companies at favorable points in the State, and immediately brought a shower of Union warnings and complaints to Harney. Within a week the information received caused him to inform Price of these complaints, and of his intention to organize Union Home Guards for protection. More serious still, trustworthy news came that an invasion was threatened from the Arkansas border. Price replied with his blandest assurances, denying everything. The aggressions, he said, were acts of irresponsible individuals. To organize Home Guards would produce neighborhood collision and civil war. He should carry out the agreement to the letter. Should troops enter Missouri from Arkansas or any other State he would "cause them to return instanter." Harney, taking such declarations at their surface value, and yielding himself to the suggestions and advice of the St. Louis conserva-

Price to
Harney,
May 28 and
May 29, 1861
W R Vol
III, p 380

tives who disliked Lyon and hated Blair, remained inactive, notwithstanding a sharp admonition from Washington. The Adjutant-General wrote: CHAP XI

The President observes with concern that, notwithstanding the pledge of the State authorities to cooperate in preserving peace in Missouri, loyal citizens in great numbers continue to be driven from their homes . The professions of loyalty to the Union by the State authorities of Missouri are not to be relied upon They have already falsified their professions too often, and are too far committed to secession, to be entitled to your confidence, and you can only be sure of their desisting from their wicked purposes when it is out of their power to prosecute them You will, therefore, be unceasingly watchful of their movements, and not permit the clamors of their partisans and opponents of the wise measures already taken to prevent you from checking every movement against the Government, however disguised, under the pretended State authority The authority of the United States is paramount, and whenever it is apparent that a movement, whether by color of State authority or not, is hostile, you will not hesitate to put it down

Thomas to
Harney,
W R Vol
III, p 376

Harney had announced this identical policy in his proclamation of May 14. The difficulty was that he failed to apply and enforce his own doctrines, or rather that he lacked penetration to discern the treachery of the State authorities. He replied to the War Department:

My confidence in the honor and integrity of General Price, in the purity of his motives, and in his loyalty to the Government remains unimpaired His course as president of the State Convention that voted by a large majority against submitting an ordinance of secession, and his efforts since that time to calm the elements of discord, have served to confirm the high opinion of him I have for many years entertained.

Harney to
Thomas,
June 5, 1861
W R Vol
III, p 383

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Lyon and Blair were much better informed, and the latter wrote to Lincoln :

F. P. Blair, Jr., to the President, May 30, 1861. Peckham, "General Nathaniel Lyon," p. 223.

I have to-day delivered to General Harney the order of the 16th of May above mentioned relieving him, feeling that the progress of events and condition of affairs in this State make it incumbent upon me to assume the grave responsibility of this act, the discretionary power in the premises having been given me by the President

The President and the Secretary of War duly sustained the act.

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This change of command soon brought matters in Missouri to a crisis. The State authorities were quickly convinced that Lyon would tolerate no evasion or misunderstanding. They therefore asked an interview, and Lyon sent Governor Jackson and General Price a safeguard to visit St. Louis. They on the one part, and Lyon and Blair on the other, with one or two witnesses, held an interview of four hours on June 11. The Governor proposed that the State should remain neutral; that he would not attempt to organize the militia under the military bill, on condition that the Union Home Guards should be disarmed and no further Federal troops should be stationed in Missouri. Lyon rejected this proposal, insisting that the Governor's rebel "State Guards" should be disarmed and the military bill abandoned, and that the Federal Government should enjoy its unrestricted right to move and station its troops throughout the State, to repel invasion or protect its citizens. This the Governor refused. So the discussion terminated. Jackson and Price hurried by a special train back to Jefferson City, burn-

ing bridges as they went. Arrived at the capital, the Governor at once published a proclamation of war. He recited the interview and its result, called fifty thousand militia into the active service of the State, and closed his proclamation by coupling together the preposterous and irreconcilable announcements of loyalty to the United States and declaration of war against them—a very marvel of impudence, even among the numerous kindred curiosities of secession literature.¹

This sudden announcement of active hostility did not take Lyon by surprise. Thoroughly informed of the conspirators' plans, he had made preparations for equally energetic action. Though Jackson had crippled the railroad, the Missouri River was an open military highway, and numerous swift steamboats lay at the St. Louis wharf. On the afternoon of June 13 he embarked one of his regular batteries and several battalions of his Missouri Volunteers, and steamed with all possible speed up the river to Jefferson City, the capital of

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¹ "In issuing this proclamation I hold it to be my solemn duty to remind you that Missouri is still one of the United States, that the Executive Department of the State government does not arrogate to itself the power to disturb that relation, that that power has been wisely vested in a convention which will at the proper time express your sovereign will, and that meanwhile it is your duty to obey all *constitutional* requirements of the Federal Government

"But it is equally my duty to advise you that your first allegiance is due to your own State,

and that you are under no obligation whatever to obey the *unconstitutional* edicts of the military despotism which has enthroned itself at Washington, nor to submit to the infamous and degrading sway of its wicked minions in this State. No brave and true-hearted Missourian will obey one or submit to the other. Rise, then, and drive out ignominiously the invaders who have dared to desecrate the soil which your labors have made fruitful, and which is consecrated by your homes"—Jackson, Proclamation, June 12, 1861 Peckham, "General Nathaniel Lyon," p. 252

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the State, leading the movement in person. He arrived on the 15th of June, and landing, took possession of the town without resistance, and raised the Union flag over the State house. The Governor and his adherents hurriedly fled, his Secretary of State carrying off the great seal with which to certify future pretended official acts.

There had been no time for the rebellion to gather any head at the capital; but at the town of Boonville, fifty miles farther up the river, General Price was collecting some fragments of military companies. This nucleus of opposition Lyon determined also to destroy. Leaving but a slight guard at the capital, he reembarked his force next day, and reaching Boonville on the 17th landed without difficulty, and put the half-formed rebel militia to flight after a spirited skirmish. General Price prudently kept away from the encounter; and Governor Jackson, who had come hither, and who witnessed the defeat from a hill two miles distant, once more betook himself to flight. Two on the Union and fifteen on the rebel side were killed. This affair was the outbreak of open warfare in Missouri, though secret military aggression against the United States Government had been for nearly six months carried on by the treasonable State officials, aided as far as possible by the conspiracy in the South.

The local State Government of Missouri, thus broken by the hostility of Governor Jackson and subordinate officials, was soon regularly restored. The Missouri State Convention, chosen, as already related, with the design of carrying the State into rebellion, but which, unexpectedly to the conspira-



GENERAL NATHANIEL LYON.

tors, remained true to the Union, had, on adjourning its session from March to December, wisely created an emergency committee with power to call it together on any necessary occasion. This committee now issued its call, under which the convention assembled in Jefferson City on the 22d of July. Many of its members had joined the rebellion, but a full constitutional quorum remained, and took up the task of reconstructing the disorganized machinery of civil administration. By a series of ordinances it declared the State offices vacant, abrogated the military bill and other treasonable legislation, provided for new elections, and finally, on the 31st of July, inaugurated a provisional government, which thereafter made the city of St. Louis its official headquarters. Hamilton R. Gamble, a conservative, was made Governor. He announced his unconditional adherence to the Union, and his authority was immediately recognized by the greater portion of the State. Missouri thus remained through the entire war, both in form and in substance, a State of the Union.

Nevertheless a considerable minority of its population, scattered in many parts, was strongly tinctured with sympathy for the rebellion. The conspiracy so long nursed by Governor Jackson and his adherents had taken deep and pernicious root. An anomalous condition of affairs suddenly sprung up. Amidst a strongly dominant loyalty there smoldered the embers of rebellion, and during the whole civil war there blazed up fitfully, often where least expected, the flames of neighborhood strife and guerrilla warfare to an extent and with a fierceness not equaled in any other State.

CHAP XI We shall have occasion to narrate how, under cover of this sentiment, the leaders of secession bands and armies made repeated and desolating incursions. Some months later, ex-Governor Jackson, with his perambulating State seal, set up a pretended Legislature and State government, and the Confederate authorities at Richmond enacted the farce of admitting Missouri to the Southern Confederacy. It was, however, from first to last, a palpable sham; the Confederate officials in Missouri had no capital or archives, controlled no population, permanently held no territory, collected no taxes; and Jackson was nothing more than a fugitive pretender, finding temporary refuge within Confederate camps.

CHAPTER XII

KENTUCKY

THE three States of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, forming McClellan's department, were bounded south of the Ohio River by the single State of Kentucky, stretching from east to west, and occupying at least four-fifths of the entire Ohio line. Kentucky being a slave State, the institution naturally created among her people a pervading sympathy with Southern complaints and demands. Her geographical position and her river commerce also connected her strongly with the South. On the other hand, the traditions of her local politics bound her indissolubly to the Union. The fame of her great statesman, Henry Clay, rested upon his lifelong efforts for its perpetuity. The compromise of 1850, which thwarted and for ten years postponed the Southern rebellion, was his crowning political triumph. But Henry Clay's teaching and example were being warped and perverted. Feebler minds, unable, as he would have done, to distinguish between honorable compromise and ruinous concession, undertook now to quell war by refusing to take up arms; and proposed to preserve the Government by leaving rebellion unchecked.

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The Legislature, though appealing to the South to stay secession, and though firmly refusing to call a State Convention, nevertheless protested against the use of force or coercion by the General Government against the seceding States. John J. Crittenden took similar ground, counseling Kentucky to stand by the Union, and correctly characterizing secession as simple revolution. Nevertheless he advised against the policy of coercion, and said of the seceding States, "Let them go on in peace with their experiment." A public meeting of leading citizens at Louisville first denounced secession and then denounced the President for attempting to put down secession. They apostrophized the flag and vowed to maintain the Union, but were ready to fight Lincoln. It makes one smile to read the contradictions which eminent Kentucky statesmen uttered in all seriousness.

Crittenden,
Speech
before Ken-
tucky Leg-
islature,
Mar 26, 1861
New York
"Tribune,"
Mar 30, 1861

Moore,
"Rebellion
Record "
Vol I Doc-
uments,
pp 72-76

James
Guthrie,
Speech at
Louisville,
Apr 18, 1861
Moore,
"Rebellion
Record "
Vol I Doc-
uments,
p 73

A people that have prospered beyond example in the records of time, free and self-governed, without oppression, without taxation to be felt, are now going to cut each other's throats, and why? Because Presidents Lincoln and Davis could n't settle the etiquette upon which the troops were to be withdrawn from Fort Sumter

This was the analysis of one. Another said:

Why this war? . . . Because Mr. Lincoln has been elected President of the country and Mr. Davis could not be, and therefore a Southern Confederacy was to be formed by Southern demagogues, and now they are attempting to drag you on with them . . . Let us not fight the North or the South, but, firm in our position, tell our sister border States that with them we will stand to maintain the Union, to preserve the peace, and uphold our honor and our flag, which they would trail in the dust . . . If we must fight, let us fight Lincoln and not our Government.

Archibald
Dixon,
Speech at
Louisville,
Apr 18, 1861
Moore,
"Rebellion
Record "
Vol I Doc-
uments,
pp 75, 76

The resolutions of the meeting were quite as illogical. They declared that: CHAP XII

The present duty of Kentucky is to maintain her present independent position, taking sides not with the Administration, nor with the seceding States, but with the Union against them both, declaring her soil to be sacred from the hostile tread of either; and, if necessary, to make the declaration good with her strong right arm.

Moore,
"Rebellion
Record"
Vol I Doc-
uments,
p 74

The preposterous assumption was also greatly strengthened in the popular mind by the simultaneous publication of an address of the same tenor in Tennessee, from John Bell and others. Bell had been one of the four candidates for President in the election of 1860—the one for whom both Kentucky and Tennessee cast their electoral votes; and as the standard-bearer of the "Constitutional Union" party had in many ways reiterated his and their devotion to "the Union, the Constitution, and the enforcement of the laws." The address distinctly disapproved secession; it condemned the policy of the Administration; it unequivocally avowed the duty of Tennessee to resist by force of arms the subjugation of the South. Apl 18, 1861

What shall be said when men of reputed wisdom and experience proclaim such inconsistencies? All these incidents are among the ever-recurring signs of that dangerous demoralization of public sentiment, of that utter confusion of political principles, of that helpless bewilderment of public thought, into which portions of the country had unconsciously lapsed.

Moore,
"Rebellion
Record"
Vol I Doc-
uments,
pp. 71, 72.

Governor Magoffin of Kentucky and his personal adherents seem to have been ready to rush into overt rebellion. His official message declared that

CHAP XII

Macoffin to
Cameron,
Apr 15, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p 98

Kentucky would resist the principles and policy of the Republican party "to the death, if necessary"; that the Union had practically ceased to exist; and that she would not stand by with folded arms while the seceded States were being "subjugated to an antislavery Government." With open contumacy he replied to President Lincoln's official call, "Kentucky will furnish no troops for the wicked purpose of subduing her sister Southern States." He applied to Jefferson Davis for arms, and to the Louisville banks for money, but neither effort succeeded. The existing Legislature contained too many Union members to give him unchecked control of the public credit of the State. He was therefore perforce driven to adhere to the policy of "neutrality," as the best help he could give the rebellion. Nevertheless, he was not without power for mischief. The militia of Kentucky had recently been reorganized under the personal influence and direction of Simon B. Buckner, who, as inspector-general, was the legal and actual general-in-chief. Buckner, like the Governor, ex-Vice-President Breckinridge, and others, was an avowed "neutral" but a predetermined rebel, who in the following September entered the military service of Jefferson Davis. For the present he busied himself with intrigue to forward the secession of Kentucky, which he carried on under pretense of his formal instructions from the Governor to employ the "State Guard," or rather its shadow of authority, to prevent the violation of "State neutrality" by either the Southern or the Northern armies.

The public declarations and manifestations in Kentucky were not reassuring to the people north

of the Ohio line. Governor Morton of Indiana wrote: "The country along the Ohio River bordering on Kentucky is in a state of intense alarm. The people entertain no doubt but that Kentucky will speedily go out of the Union. They are in daily fear that marauding parties from the other side of the river will plunder and burn their towns." Even after the lapse of some weeks this fear was not dissipated. General McClellan wrote:

CHAP XII
Morton to
Cameron,
Apr 28, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
152

The frontier of Indiana and Illinois is in a very excited and almost dangerous condition. In Ohio there is more calmness. I have been in more full communication with the people. A few arms have been supplied, and all means have been taken to quiet them along the frontier. Special messengers have reached me from the Governors of Indiana and Illinois, demanding heavy guns and expressing great alarm. I sent Lieutenant Williams to confer with Governor Morton, to tell him that I have no heavy guns, and to explain to him the impropriety of placing them in position along the frontier just at the present time. I have promised Governor Yates some heavy guns at Cairo as soon as I can get them.

McClellan himself was not free from apprehension.

I am very anxious to learn the views of the General [Scott] in regard to Western Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri. At any moment it may become necessary to act in some one of these directions. From reliable information I am sure that the Governor of Kentucky is a traitor. Buckner is under his influence, so it is necessary to watch them. I hear to-night that one thousand secessionists are concentrating at a point opposite Gallipolis. Cairo is threatened.

McClellan
to Towns-
end, May
10, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, pp
211, 212

He proposed, therefore, to reënforce and fortify Cairo, place several gun-boats on the river, and in case of need to cross into Kentucky and occupy

CHAP XII Covington Heights for the better defense of Cincinnati. This condition of affairs brought another important question to final decision. The Governor of Illinois had ordered the summary seizure of war material at Cairo, a measure which President Lincoln formally approved. Ordinary river commerce was more tenderly dealt with; but the threatening demonstrations from the South were beginning to show that this was a dangerous leniency. McClellan therefore asked explicitly whether provisions destined for the seceded States or for the Southern army should longer be permitted to be sent, to which an official order came on May 8: "Since the order of the 2d, the Secretary of War decides that provisions must be stopped at Cairo."

McClellan
to Gen
Scott,
May 7, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
194

Townsend
to McClellan,
May 8,
1861 W R
Series III,
Vol. I, p
194

In reality matters in Kentucky were not quite so bad as they appeared. With sober second thought, the underlying loyalty of her people began to assert itself. Breckinridge and his extreme Southern doctrines had received only a little more than one-third the votes of the State.¹ Mr. Lincoln was a Kentuckian by birth, and had been a consistent Whig; their strong clanship could not quite give him up as hopelessly lost in abolitionism. Earnest Unionists also quickly perceived that "armed neutrality" must soon become a practical farce; many of them from the first used it as an artful contrivance to kill secession. The popular branch of the Legislature indeed declared for "strict neutrality," and approved the Governor's refusal to furnish

¹ The vote of Kentucky in the Presidential election of 1860 was Lincoln, 1364, Douglas, 25,651; Breckinridge, 53,143, Bell, 66,058 — "Tribune Almanac," 1861

troops to the President. Superficially, this was placing the State in a contumacious attitude, but this action was not a true exponent of the public feeling. The undercurrent of political movement is explained by a letter of John J. Crittenden, at that time the most influential single voice in the State. On the 17th of May he wrote to General Scott :

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Resolutions, May
16, 1861

1861.

The position of Kentucky, and the relation she occupies towards the Government of the Union, is not, I fear, understood at Washington. It ought to be well understood. Very important consequences may depend upon it and upon her proper treatment. Unfortunately for us, our Governor does not sympathize with Kentucky in respect to the secession. His opinions and feelings incline him strongly to the side of the South. His answer to the requisition for troops was in its terms hasty and unbecoming and does not correspond with usual and gentlemanly courtesy. But while she regretted the language of his answer, Kentucky acquiesced in his declining to furnish the troops called for, and she did so, not because she loved the Union the less, but she feared that if she had parted with those troops, and sent them to serve in your ranks, she would have been overwhelmed by the secessionists at home and severed from the Union; and it was to preserve, substantially and ultimately, our connection with the Union that induced us to acquiesce in the partial infraction of it by our Governor's refusal of the troops required. This was the most prevailing and general motive. To this may be added the strong indisposition of our people to a civil war with the South, and the apprehended consequences of a civil war within our State and among our own people. I could elaborate and strengthen all this, but I will leave the subject to your own reflection, with this only remark, that I think Kentucky's excuse is a good one, and that, under all the circumstances of the complicated case, she is rendering better service in her present position than she could by becoming an active party in the contest.

MS.

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In truth, Kentucky was undergoing a severe political struggle. The Governor was constantly stimulating rebellion. The Legislature had once more met on May 6, being a second time convened in special session by the Governor's proclamation. The Governor's special message now boldly accused the President of usurpation, and declared the Constitution violated, the Government subverted, the Union broken. He again urged that the State be armed and a convention be called. It was these more radical and dangerous measures which the Union members warded off with a legislative resolution of "neutrality."

So also the military bill which was eventually passed was made to serve the Union instead of the secession cause; a Union Board of Commissioners was provided to control the Governor's expenditures under it. A "Home Guard" was authorized, to check and offset Buckner's "State Guard" of rebellious proclivities. Privates and officers of both organizations were required to swear allegiance to both the State and the Union. Finally, it provided that the arms and munitions should be used neither against the United States nor against the Confederate States, unless to protect Kentucky against invasion. Such an attitude of qualified loyalty can only be defended by the plea of its compulsory adoption as a lesser evil. But it served to defeat the conspiracy to assemble a "sovereignty convention" to inaugurate secession; and the progress of the Kentucky Legislature, from its "anti-coercion" protest in January to its merely defensive "neutrality" resolutions and laws in May, was a great gain.

From the beginning of the rebellion, Lincoln felt that Kentucky would be a turning weight in the scale of war. He believed he knew the temper and fidelity of his native State, and gave her his special care and confidence. Though Governor Magoffin refused him troops, there came to him from private sources the unmistakable assurance that many Kentuckians were ready to fight for the Union. His early and most intimate friend, Joshua F. Speed, was now an honored and influential citizen of Louisville. At Washington also he had taken into a cordial acquaintanceship a characteristic Kentuckian, William Nelson, a young, brave, and energetic lieutenant of the United States navy. Nelson saw his usefulness, and perhaps also his opportunity, in an effort to redeem his State, rather than in active service on the quarter-deck. He possessed the social gifts, the free manners, the impulsive temperament peculiar to the South. Mr. Lincoln gave him leave of absence, and sent him to Kentucky without instructions.

At the same time the President brought another personal influence to bear. Major Anderson was the hero of the hour, and being a Kentuckian, that State rang with the praise of his prudence and valor in defending Sumter. On the 7th of May Lincoln gave him a special commission, "To receive into the army of the United States as many regiments of volunteer troops from the State of Kentucky, and from the western part of the State of Virginia, as shall be willing to engage in the service of the United States," and sent him to Cincinnati, convenient to both fields of labor. These three persons, Speed and Nelson at Louisville, and

CHAP. XII

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W. R.
Series III.,
Vol. I., p.
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CHAP XII Anderson within easy consulting distance, formed a rallying point and medium of communication with the President. The Unionists, thus encouraged, began the formation of Union Clubs and Home Guards, while the Government gave them assurance of protection in case of need. General McClellan wrote:

The Union men of Kentucky express a firm determination to fight it out Yesterday Garrett Davis told me "We will remain in the Union by voting if we can, by fighting if we must, and if we cannot hold our own, we will call on the General Government to aid us" He asked me what I would do if they called on me for assistance, and convinced me that the majority were in danger of being overpowered by a better-armed minority. I replied that if there were time I would refer to General Scott for orders If there were not time, that I would cross the Ohio with 20,000 men If that were not enough, with 30,000, and if necessary, with 40,000; but that I would not stand by and see the loyal Union men of Kentucky crushed. I have strong hopes that Kentucky will remain in the Union, and the most favorable feature of the whole matter is that the Union men are now ready to abandon the position of "armed neutrality," and to enter heart and soul into the contest by our side

McClellan
to Towns-
end, May
17, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
236

In a short time Nelson quietly brought five thousand Government muskets to Louisville, under the auspices and control of a committee of leading citizens. Anderson wrote to Lincoln: "I had the pleasure to receive yesterday your letter of the 14th instant introducing Mr. Joshua F. Speed, and giving me instructions about issuing arms to our friends in Kentucky. I will carefully attend to the performance of that duty. Mr. Speed and other gentlemen for whom he will vouch, viz., Hon. James Guthrie, Garrett Davis, and Charles A. Mar-

shall, advise that I should not, at present, have anything to do with the raising of troops in Kentucky. The committee charged with that matter will go on with the organization and arming of the Home Guard, which they will see is composed of reliable men." Under date of May 28 Lincoln received further report of these confidential measures to counteract the conspiracy:

CHAP XII

Anderson
to Lincoln,
May 19, 1861
MS

The undersigned, a private committee to distribute the arms brought to the State of Kentucky by Lieutenant Wilham Nelson, of the United States navy, among true, reliable Union men, represent to the Executive Department of the United States Government that members of this Board have superintended the distribution of the whole quantity of five thousand muskets and bayonets. We have been reliably informed and believe that they have been put in the hands of true and devoted Union men, who are pledged to support the Constitution of the United States and the enforcement of the laws; and, if the occasion should arise, to use them to put down all attempts to take Kentucky, by violence or fraud, out of the Union ¹

The committee added that this had greatly strengthened the cause, that twenty thousand more could be safely intrusted to the Union men, who were applying for them and eager to get them, and recommended that this system of arming Kentucky be resumed and widely extended. The struggle between treason and loyalty in the Kentucky Legislature had consumed the month of May, ending, as we have seen, by decided advantages gained for the Union, and attended by the important un-

Committee,
Report,
May 28, 1861
MS

¹ The report was signed by C A Wickliffe, Garrett Davis, J H Garrard, J Harlan, James Speed, and Thornton F. Marshall, and also indorsed by J F Robinson, W B Huston, J. K Goodloe, J B Bruner, and Joshua F. Speed

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derstanding and combination between prominent Kentucky citizens and President Lincoln whereby the loyalists were furnished with arms and assured of decisive military support. The Kentucky Legislature adjourned *sine die* on May 24, and the issue was thereupon transferred to the people of the State. The contest took a double form: first an appeal to the ballot in an election for Members of Congress, which the President's call for a special session on the 4th of July made necessary. An exciting political campaign ensued, and whatever the Union sentiment of the State had hitherto lacked of decision and boldness was largely aroused or created by this contest. The Unionists achieved a brilliant and conclusive triumph. The election was held on the 20th of June, and nine out of the ten Congressmen chosen were outspoken loyalists.

The second phase of the contest was, that it evoked a partial show of military force on both sides of the question. The military bill passed on the last day of the May session provided for organizing "Home Guards" for local defense. Whether by accident or design, Buckner's old militia law to organize the "State Guards" had required an oath of allegiance from the officers only, the new law required all the members to swear fidelity to both Kentucky and the United States, and a refusal terminated their membership. This searching touchstone at once instituted a process of separating patriots from traitors. The organization of Home Guards and the reorganization of the State Guards went on simultaneously. It would perhaps be more correct to say disorganization of the State Guards; for many loyal members

Act of May
24, 1861
Kentucky
"Session
Laws," p 6.

took advantage of the requirement to abandon the corps and to join the Home Guards, while disloyal ones seized the same chance to go to rebel camps in the South; and under the action of both public and private sentiment the State Guards languished and the Home Guards grew in numerical strength and moral influence. CHAP. XII

Meanwhile, as a third military organization, Kentuckians were enlisting directly in the service of the United States. Even before the already mentioned commission to Anderson, Colonels Guthrie and Woodruff had established "Camp Clay," on the Ohio shore above Cincinnati, where a number of Kentuckians joined a yet larger proportion of Ohioans, and were mustered into the three-months' service as the First and Second Regiments Kentucky Volunteer Infantry. These regiments were afterwards reorganized for the three-years' service; and this time, mainly filled with real Kentuckians, were on the 9th and 10th of June remustered under their old and now entirely appropriate designations. About this time also State Senator Lovell H. Rousseau, who had made a brilliant Union record in the Legislature, obtained authority to raise a brigade. On consulting with the Union leaders, it was resolved still to humor the popular "neutrality" foible till after the coming August election; and to this end he established "Camp Joe Holt," on the Indiana shore, where he gathered his recruits. The same policy kept the headquarters of Anderson yet in Cincinnati.

With the favorable change of public sentiment, and the happy issue of the Congressional election, the Union men grew bolder. At the general elec-

Van Horne,
"Army of
the Cum-
berland"
Vol. I, p
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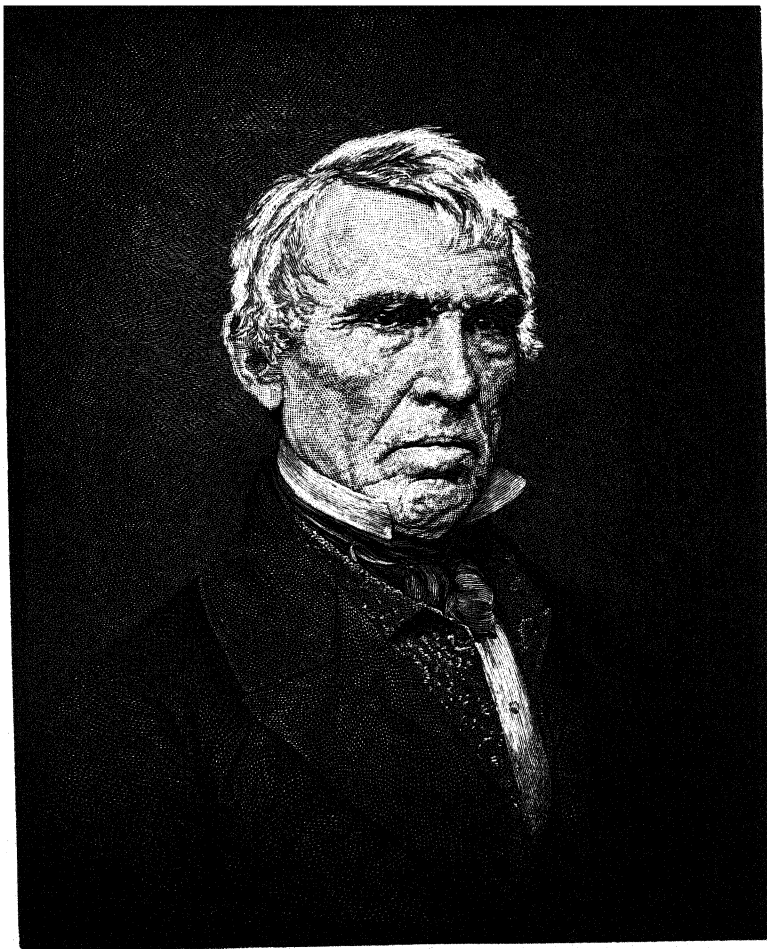
Van Horne,
"Army of
the Cum-
berland"
Vol. I, p
16

CHAP. XII tion of August 5 a new Legislature was chosen, giving the Union members a majority of three-fourths in each branch. Nelson had all this while been busy, and had secretly appointed the officers and enrolled the recruits for four regiments from central Kentucky. After the August election concealment was thrown off, and he assembled his men in "Camp Dick Robinson," which he established between Danville and Lexington. His regiments were only partly full and indifferently armed, and the transmission of proper arms to his camp was persistently opposed by rebel intrigue, threats, and forcible demonstrations. Nevertheless the camp held firm, and by alertness and courage secured its guns.

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"Danville
Quarterly
Review,"
June, 1862

Thus in a long and persistent contest, extending from January to August, the secession conspirators of Kentucky, starting with the advantage of the Governor's cooperation, military control, and general acceptance of the "neutrality" delusion, were outgeneraled and baffled. Meanwhile the customary usurpations had carried Tennessee into active rebellion; and now, despairing of success by argument and intrigue, and inspired by the rebel victory at Bull Run, the local conspiracy arranged to call in the assistance of military force. On the 17th of August the conspirators assembled in caucus in Scott County, and, it is alleged, arranged a threefold programme; first, the Governor should officially demand the removal of Union camps and troops from the State; secondly, under pretense of a popular "peace" agitation, a rising in aid of secession should take place in central Kentucky; thirdly, a simultaneous



JOHN J. CRITTENDEN.

invasion of rebel armies from Tennessee should crown and secure the work Whether or not the allegation was literally true, events developed themselves in at least an apparent conformity to the plan. Governor Magoffin wrote a letter to the President, under date of August 19, urging "the removal from the limits of Kentucky of the military force now organized and in camp within the State." In reply to this, President Lincoln, on August 24, wrote the Governor a temperate but emphatic refusal:

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I believe it is true that there is a military force in camp within Kentucky, acting by authority of the United States, which force is not very large, and is not now being augmented I also believe that some arms have been furnished to this force by the United States I also believe this force consists exclusively of Kentuckians, having their camp in the immediate vicinity of their own homes, and not assailing or menacing any of the good people of Kentucky In all I have done in the premises I have acted upon the urgent solicitation of many Kentuckians, and in accordance with what I believed, and still believe, to be the wish of a majority of all the Union-loving people of Kentucky. While I have conversed on this subject with many eminent men of Kentucky, including a large majority of her Members of Congress, I do not remember that any one of them or any other person, except your Excellency and the bearer of your Excellency's letter, has urged me to remove the military force from Kentucky, or to disband it One other very worthy citizen of Kentucky did solicit me to have the augmenting of the force suspended for a time. Taking all the means within my reach to form a judgment, I do not believe it is the popular wish of Kentucky that this force shall be removed beyond her limits, and with this impression I must respectfully decline to so remove it. I most cordially sympathize with your Excellency in the wish to preserve the peace of my own native

CHAP XII State, Kentucky It is with regret I search and cannot find in your not very short letter any declaration or intimation that you entertain any desire for the preservation of the Federal Union

1861

"Danville
Quarterly
Review,"
June and
Sept., 1862,
pp 245, 381,
385, and 388

The other features of the general plot succeeded no better than Magoffin's application to Lincoln. Three public demonstrations were announced in evident prompting of a popular rebel uprising in central Kentucky. Under pretense of an ovation to Vallandigham, an Ohio Congressman and Democratic politician, who had already made himself notorious by speeches of a rebel tendency, a meeting was held in Owen County on September 5. On September 10 a large "peace" mass meeting was called at Frankfort, the capital, to overawe the newly assembled loyal Legislature. Still a third gathering, of "States Rights" and "peace" men, was called at Lexington on September 20, to hold a camp drill of several days, under supervision of leading secessionists.

The speeches and proceedings of these treacherous "peace" meetings sufficiently revealed their revolutionary object. They were officered and managed by men whose prior words and acts left no doubt of their sympathies and desires, and the most conspicuous of whom were soon after in important stations of command in the rebel armies. The resolutions were skillfully devised: though the phraseology was ambiguous, the arrangement and inference led to one inevitable conclusion. The substance and process were: First, That peace should be maintained. Second, To maintain peace we must preserve neutrality. Third, That it is incompatible with neutrality to tax the State "for a

cause so hopeless as the military subjugation of the Confederate States." Fourth, That a truce be called and commissioners appointed to treat for a permanent peace. At the larger gatherings, where the proceedings were more critically scanned, prudence dictated that they should refrain from definite committal; but at some of the smaller preliminary meetings the full purpose was announced "that the recall of the invading armies, and the recognition of the separate independence of the Confederate States, is the true policy to restore peace and preserve the relations of fraternal love and amity between the States"

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While these peace meetings were in course of development, the second branch of the plot was not neglected. In the county of Owen an insurrectionary force was being organized by Humphrey Marshall. There was no concealment of his purpose to march upon Frankfort, where the Legislature of the State was in session, and by force of arms break it up. Senator Garrett Davis of Kentucky related the attendant circumstances in a speech in the United States Senate:

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I reached there to attend a session of the Court of Appeals on the very evening that it was said Humphrey Marshall was to make his incursion into Franklin County, and to storm the capital. Some members, especially secession members of the Legislature, and some citizens of the town of Frankfort, and one or two judges of our Court of Appeals, left Frankfort hurriedly in the expectation that it was to be sacked that night by Humphrey Marshall's insurgent hosts. I myself, with other gentlemen, provided ourselves with arms to take part in the defense of the Legislature and the capital of the State. We sent to Lexington, where there were encamped three to five hundred Union troops, who had been enlisted in

CHAP XII the Union service for the defense of the Legislature and
"Globe," the capital of our State, and had them brought down at
Mar 13, 1862, three o'clock in the morning.
p 1214

As events progressed, both these branches of the plot signally failed. The peace meetings did not result in a popular uprising; they served only to show the relative weakness of the secession conspiracy. Such manifestations excited the Union majority to greater vigilance and effort, and their preparation and boldness overawed the contemplated insurrectionary outbreak. A decisive turn of affairs had indeed come, but armed conflict was avoided. Instead of the Union Legislature being driven from the capital and dispersed, ex-Vice-President Breckinridge, William Preston, and other leaders of the conspiracy soon after hurriedly left Kentucky with their rebellious followers and joined the Confederate army just beyond the Tennessee border, to take part in the third branch of the plot—a simultaneous invasion of Kentucky at three different points.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CONFEDERATE MILITARY LEAGUE

IT was constantly assumed that secession was a movement of the entire South. The fallacy of this assumption becomes apparent when we remember the time required for the full organization and development of the rebellion. From the 12th of October, when Governor Gist issued his proclamation convening the South Carolina Legislature to inaugurate secession, to January 26, when Louisiana passed her secession ordinance, is a period of three and a half months. In this first period, as it may be called, only the six Cotton States reached a positive attitude of insurrection; and they, as is believed, by less than a majority of their citizens. Texas, the seventh, did not finally join them till a week later.

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1860

1861

During all this time the eight remaining slave States, with certainly as good a claim to be considered the voice of the South, earnestly advised and protested against the precipitate and dangerous step. But secession had its active partisans in them. As in the Cotton States, their several capitals were the natural centers of disunion; and, with few exceptions, their State officials held radical opinions on the slavery question. With the gradual progress

CHAP XIII

1861

of insurrection therefore in the extreme South four of the interior slave States gravitated into secession. The change was very gradual; perhaps because a majority of their people wished to remain in the Union, and it was necessary to wait until by slow degrees the public opinion could be overcome. The anomalous condition and course of Virginia have already been described—its Union vote in January, the apparently overwhelming Union majority of its convention, its vacillating and contradictory votes during February and March, and its sudden plunge into a secession ordinance and a military league with Jefferson Davis immediately after the Sumter bombardment. The whole development of the change is explained when we remember that Richmond had been one of the chief centers of secession conspiracy since the Frémont and Buchanan campaign of 1856. In the other interior slave States the secession movement underwent various forms, according to the greater obstacles which its advocates encountered.

1861.

North Carolina, it will be remembered, gave a discouraging answer to the first proposal, and the earliest demonstrations of the conspiracy elicited no popular response. On the 9th and 10th of January an immature combination of State troops and citizens seized Forts Johnston and Caswell, but the Governor immediately ordered their restoration to the Federal authorities. The Governor excused the hostile act by alleging the popular apprehension that Federal garrisons were to be placed in them, and earnestly deprecated any show of coercion. He received a conciliatory response from the War Department that no occupation of them

W R Vol
I, pp 474-
476, 484

Ellis to
Buchanan,
Jan 12, 1861
W R Vol
I, pp 484,
485

was intended unless they should be threatened. Nevertheless, conspiracy continued, and as usual, under the guise of solicitude for peace; and, in a constant clamor for additional guarantees, the revolutionary feeling was augmented little by little. There seems to have been great fluctuation of public opinion. A convention was ordered by the Legislature and subsequently voted down at the polls. Commissioners were sent to the peace convention at Washington, and also to the provisional rebel Congress at Montgomery, with instructions limiting their powers to an effort at mediation. At the same time the North Carolina House passed a unanimous resolution that if reconciliation failed, North Carolina must go with the slave States. Next a military bill was passed to reorganize the militia, and arm ten thousand volunteers.

In reality it seems to have been the same struggle which took place elsewhere; the State officials and radical politicians favoring secession, and the people clinging to the Union, but yielding finally to the arts and intrigues of their leaders. When Sumter was bombarded and President Lincoln called for troops, the Governor threw his whole influence and authority into the insurrectionary movement. He sent an insulting refusal to Washington, and the next day ordered his State troops to seize Forts Caswell and Johnston. A week later (April 22) he seized the Fayetteville arsenal, containing 37,000 stands of arms, 3000 kegs of powder, and an immense supply of shells and shot. We may also infer that he was in secret league with the Montgomery rebellion; for the rebel Secretary of War made a requisition upon

CHAP. XIII

Holt to
Ellis, Jan
15, 1861
W. R. Vol
I, p. 485

"Annual
Cyclopæ-
dia," 1861,
p. 538

Ellis to
Cameron,
Apr 15, 1861
W. R. Vol
I, p. 486

1861

"Annual
Cyclopæ-
dia," 1861,
p. 540

Walker to
Ellis,
Apr 22, 1861
W. R. Vol
I, p. 486

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Ellis to
Walker,
Apl 24, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 487

1861

Moore,
"Rebellion
Record"
Vol I Doc-
uments,
pp 263, 264

him, and he at once placed his whole military preparation at the service of Jefferson Davis, sending troops and arms to Richmond and elsewhere. It was a bold usurpation of executive power. Neither Legislature nor convention had ordered rebellion; but from that time on the State was arrayed in active hostility to the Union. It was not till the 1st of May that the Legislature for the second time ordered a convention, which met and passed an ordinance of secession on the 20th of that month, also formally accepting the Confederate States constitution.

In the State of Arkansas the approaches to secession were even slower and more difficult than in North Carolina. There seems to have been little disposition at first, among her people or leaders, to embark in the disastrous undertaking. The movement appears to have begun when, on December 20, 1860, a commissioner came from Alabama, and by an address to the Legislature invited Arkansas to unite in the scheme for separation. No direct success followed the request, and the deceitful expedient of a convention to ascertain the will of the people was resorted to. All parties joined in this measure: the fire-eaters to promote secession, the Unionists to thwart it. An election for or against a convention took place February 18, 1861, resulting in 27,412 votes for and 15,826 votes against it; though as compared with the Presidential election it was estimated that at least 10,815 voters did not go to the polls. At a later election for delegates the returns indicated a Union vote of 23,626 against a secession vote of 17,927.

When the convention was organized, March 4, 1861, the delegates are reported to have chosen Union officers by a majority of six; many of the delegates must have already betrayed their constituents by a change of front. Revolutionary tricks had been employed, the United States arsenal at Little Rock had been seized (February 8), and the ordnance stores at Napoleon (February 12), while no doubt the insurrectionary influences from the neighboring Cotton States were indefinitely multiplied. With all this the progress of the conspirators was not rapid. A conditional secession ordinance was voted down by the convention, thirty-nine to thirty-five. This ought to have effectually killed the movement; but it shows the greater aggressiveness and persistence of the secession leaders, that, instead of yielding to defeat, they kept alive their scheme, by the insidious proposal to take a new popular vote on the question in the following August. Meanwhile there were a continual loss of Union sentiment and growth of secession excitement; and, as in other States, when the Sumter catastrophe occurred, the Governor and his followers placed the State in an attitude of insurrection by the refusal to comply with Lincoln's call for troops, and by hostile military organization. Thereafter disunion had a free course. The convention was hastily called together April 20, and, meeting on the 6th of May, immediately passed the customary ordinance of secession.

In no other State did secession resort to such methods of usurpation as in Tennessee. The secession faction of the State was insignificant in

CHAP XIII

"Annual
Cyclopæ-
dia," 1861,
p 22

CHAP XIII

"Annual
Cyclopæ-
dia," 1861,
p 677

numbers, but its audacity was perhaps not equaled in any other locality; and it may almost be said that Governor Isham G. Harris carried the State into rebellion single-handed. The whole range of his plottings cannot, of course, be known. He called a session of the Legislature January 7, 1861, and sent them a highly inflammatory message. A convention bill was passed and approved January 19, which submitted the question of "Convention" or "no Convention," and which also provided that any ordinance of disunion should be ratified by popular vote before taking effect. At the election held on February 9 there appeared on the vote for delegates a Union majority of 64,114, and against holding the convention a majority of 11,875.¹ This overwhelming popular decision for a time silenced the conspirators.

The fall of Fort Sumter and Lincoln's call for troops afforded the Governor a new pretext to continue his efforts. He sent the President a defiant refusal, and responded to a requisition from Montgomery for troops, being no doubt under secret promises to the rebellion. In the revolu-

¹We have taken these figures as we find them in the newspapers of that period and as they are copied into the "Annual Cyclopædia" for that year. It is however reasonable to suppose that the vote against a convention must have been nearly if not quite as large, as the vote for Union delegates, and the great discrepancy leads to the inference that the returns on this head were either tampered with in the counties, or erroneously announced at Nashville. In a recent work by ex-Confederate

writers ("Military Annals of Tennessee — Confederate," published in 1886, p 60), it is stated that "The majority against calling a convention was nearly or quite sixty thousand." So also, Mr W A Goodspeed of Chicago, writing to the editors of "The Century" under date of May 2, 1888, says "In the preparation of our history ["History of Tennessee," 1887] we found it impossible to ascertain the exact majority, but we did ascertain to a certainty that it was not far from sixty thousand."

tionary excitement which immediately followed, the Governor's official authority, and the industrious local conspiracy of which he was the head, carried all before them. Since it was evident that he could not obtain a convention to do his bidding, he resolved to employ the Legislature, which he once more called together. In secret sessions he was able to manipulate it at his will. On the 1st of May the Legislature passed a joint resolution directing the Governor to appoint commissioners "to enter into a military league with the authorities of the Confederate States," placing the whole force of the State at the control of Jefferson Davis, and on the 7th of the month a formal military league or treaty to this effect was signed. Even after this the Governor had difficult work. Eastern Tennessee was pervaded by so strong a Union sentiment that it continued to labor and protest against being dragged into rebellion contrary to its will, but the opposition was of little direct avail. Military organization had its grasp on the whole State, and citizens not in arms had no choice but to submit to the orders issued from Montgomery and Nashville.

It will be seen from this recital that the secession movement divides itself into two distinct periods. The first group, the Cotton States, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Florida, and Texas, took action mainly between the 12th of October, 1860, and February 4, 1861, a period of a little more than three and a half months. The second group, the interior slave States, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Arkansas, was occupied by the struggle about

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Moore,
"Rebellion
Record"
Vol I Doc-
uments,
pp 201, 202

CHAP XIII three months longer, or a total of six months after Lincoln's election. So also these two periods exhibited separate characteristics in their formative processes. The first group, being more thoroughly permeated by the spirit of revolt, and acting with greater vigor and promptness, shows us the semblance at least of voluntary confederation, through its Provisional Congress at Montgomery. On the other hand, the action of the four interior slave States was, in each case, with more or less distinctness, at first merely that of joining the original nucleus in a military league, in which the excitement of military preparation and allurements of military glory, not the consideration of political expediency, turned the scale.

There remained still the third group, consisting of the border slave States of Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri. The efforts of the conspirators to involve Maryland in secession have already been detailed, as well as the persistence they employed to gain control of Kentucky and Missouri. In these States the attempt failed because of the direct and indirect military support which the Government was able to give immediately to the Union sentiment and organizations. Had it been possible to extend the same encouragement and help to Arkansas and Tennessee, they also might have been saved. This becomes more apparent when we remember how quickly half of Virginia was reclaimed and held steadfastly loyal during the war. The remaining slave State, Delaware, was so slightly tainted with treason that her attitude can scarcely be said to have been in

doubt; moreover, her geographical position threw her destiny inseparably with the free States. CHAP XIII

The adhesion which we have described of the four interior slave States of Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Arkansas to the Confederate States at once wholly changed the scope and strength of the rebellion. It extended its territorial area nearly one-third, and almost doubled its population and resources. It could now claim to be a compact nation of eleven States, with a territory more than double the size of any European nation except Russia, and with a population of five and a half millions of whites and three and a half millions of blacks. It had a long sea-coast, several fine harbors, and many navigable rivers. It contained a great variety of lands, important diversities of climate, and a wide range of agricultural products. Its country was as yet sparsely inhabited, and was known to include very considerable mineral wealth, while its manufacturing capabilities were almost wholly untouched. The exultation and enthusiastic prophecies of the rebel chiefs at the successful beginning of their daring project were perhaps not unnatural when we reflect that their mischievous design and reprehensible cause had secured the support of such fair and substantial elements of national greatness and power.

CHAPTER XIV

CIVIL WAR

CHAP XIV **T**HE Administration was not slow to learn the lesson of the hour. Only half of the twenty days' notice to disperse, given the rebels by Lincoln's first proclamation, had elapsed — the troops under the first call had not been mustered in — and Washington could not be considered permanently safe, when the formation of a new army for more thorough and prolonged work was announced — not publicly as yet, but to the Governors of the States who would be required to furnish the new levy. The several events detailed in the last few chapters dictated the step as one of such unmistakable necessity that it can hardly be said to have been discussed. It needed no demonstration to show that the South was in revolt, and that the North was determined to suppress it.

The actual boundaries, the time and course and the probable phases of the conflict, could not be mapped out; but the substantial fact of a serious military struggle of considerable proportions was self-evident. Preparations for it were therefore at once begun, with cautious deliberation. Ten days after the first proclamation the Secretary of War wrote in response to the overwhelming tenders

of three-months' volunteers from several Gov-
 ernors: "No further troops beyond the quota of
 your State can be received at present, unless they
 will agree to volunteer for the period of three
 years, if not sooner discharged. In that event,
 and upon such terms, one or two regiments more
 would be accepted from your State and mustered
 into service." This was written to the Governor of
 New Jersey, April 26, and similar replies went to
 Connecticut, Indiana, and Michigan. From day to
 day the same general answer and notification were
 sent out to other States, and a week later (May 3)
 appeared the President's proclamation, calling into
 service 42,034 three-years' volunteers, 22,714 en-
 listed men to add ten regiments to the regular
 army, and 18,000 seamen for blockade service —
 a total immediate increase of 82,748; swelling the
 entire military establishment of the nation, in-
 cluding the regular army and navy and the troops
 under the first call, to an army of 156,861 and a
 navy of 25,600.¹

CHAP XIV
 Cameron
 to Oiden,
 Apl 26, 1861
 W. R. Vol
 I, Series
 III, p 143

It was easy enough for the President to insert
 numbers in a proclamation; but there is not room
 here to describe the task of deciding constitu-
 tional powers and responsibilities, examining laws,
 devising organization and arranging details, all of
 which had to be done in a single week, and in the
 midst of dangers. President, Cabinet, and mili-

¹ Regular army (Report, April 5)	17,113
Proclamation of April 15 (three-months' volunteers)	75,000
Proclamation of May 3 (three-years' volunteers)	64,748
	<hr/> 156,861
Regular navy (March 4, 1861)	7,600
Proclamation of May 3	18,000
	<hr/> 25,600

CHAP XIV tary and naval officers were busy day and night. It is scarcely possible to enumerate the elements of perplexity and unavoidable confusion suddenly thrown together. The abrupt revolutionary uprising; the tumult of enthusiasm in the North; the interruption of mail and telegraph by the Baltimore riot; the succession of military resignations and changes; the orders of the Government at Washington; the extraordinary powers given to the New York Committee and acts performed by it; military orders by General Scott at the capital, and independent distribution of arms and munitions directed in the emergency by General Wool at New York; conflicting questions and requisitions from sixteen different State executives; four different grades of military service, regulars, three months' volunteers, State militia, and three-years' volunteers, still further complicated by independent organizations in border States whose Governors refused coöperation; and all amid a quasi-field campaign about Washington—it was a bedlam compared to the dignified and deliberate red tape and pigeon-hole methods of quiet times.

What with the added necessity for urgency and secrecy, the principal departments of the Government, greatly disorganized by resignation, for a short time staggered under the sudden burdens of routine work which could not wait, and which there were neither sufficient chiefs of bureaus nor clerks to expedite. Confusion even grew out of good-natured willingness to cooperate and zeal to assist. Impatient governors and State agents, and irrepressible colonels and captains, went to whatever fountain-head of authority they could reach—



ALEXANDER W. RANDALL.



WILLIAM A. BUCKINGHAM.

to Seward for a battery of guns, or to Chase for a horse-contract to mount a regiment. There is no counting the knotty tangles of red tape which as a last resort were brought for the President to cut by his superior authority. CHAP XIV.

Had Lincoln been a careless or a reckless man, it is difficult to imagine the damage he might have done, or the risk and excess he might have suffered the Government to run into under such conditions. The enthusiasm of the North was already changing to impatience. He was beset by appeals to show energy; by clamors to accept more troops. Suggestions of every shade and merit were pressed upon him, to consider or embark in showy and startling projects. One would have him seize and hang traitors; another, burn Baltimore; a third, destroy Charleston; a fourth, liberate and arm the slaves; a fifth, raise an army of 300,000. Whatever might be other differences, everybody was for promptness, vigor, action, advance. Delay was denounced, muttered accusations of incompetency were heard, and the "New-York Times," echoed by journals of less importance, boldly advised the immediate resignation of the Cabinet and, as already mentioned, warned the President that he might be superseded.

In such a whirl, Lincoln's steady common sense and caution were a rock of safety to the nation. Whatever was essential, involving no matter how much responsibility, he did as soon as the necessity became apparent. But, with equal purpose, he refrained from doing what was not essential; and often—generally indeed—refrained even from explaining or defending his non-action; or if he did

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explain, it was only by a casual and general allusion. Thus, on the 1st of May, during an interview with half a dozen members of the Seventh New York, the President, in the course of friendly conversation, spoke in a tone of amusement rather than harshness of the "Times's" proposition to depose him; and said that just now the Government had three things to do: defend Washington, blockade the ports, and retake Government property. All possible dispatch was to be used in these matters, and it would be well if the people would cordially assist in this work before clamoring for more. The proclamation for calling out the troops, he said, was only two weeks old; no other people on earth could have surpassed what we had done in that time. But while he was thus patient and hopeful about the proximate form and issue of the contest, his discernment of its ultimate and underlying principle was clearer and deeper than that of any of his critics:

J. H.
Diary, May
1, 1861 MS

For my own part, I consider the first necessity that is upon us, is of proving that popular government is not an absurdity. We must settle this question now,—whether in a free government the minority have the right to break it up whenever they choose. If we fail, it will go far to prove the incapability of the people to govern themselves. There may be one consideration used in stay of such final judgment, but that is not for us to use in advance. That is, that there exists in our case an instance of a vast and far-reaching disturbing element which the history of no other free nation will probably ever present. That, however, is not for us to say at present. Taking the government as we found it, we will see if the majority can preserve it.

Ibid., May
7, 1861 MS

The increase of the army once determined upon, and the proclamation issued, the chief care of the

Administration was bestowed upon the organization of the new force. The best officers were promoted out of the old into the new "regular" regiments; the best arms were reserved for them and the three-years' volunteers. No little complaint grew out of this discrimination; every regiment, no matter of what service or term of enlistment, protested it would receive only arms of the latest invention and most perfect pattern. The Northern arsenals were very scantily supplied, except with indifferent arms of antiquated manufacture. Commanders gave notice of danger that the term of service of some of the regiments would expire before they could be equipped. The national armories were driven to their utmost capacity; the President authorized the erection of a new and extensive establishment at Rock Island, Illinois, to supply the West; all available private factories and workshops were brought into service; purchases in Europe were authorized. But military supplies cannot be extemporized, and the nation had no adequate preparation for such a vast army, so soon to be further augmented to colossal proportions. From all quarters came requisitions and demands for rifles, for cannon, for ammunition, for equipments, for tents, for transportation, for subsistence.

Many places in the country, hitherto unconscious of danger, suddenly felt alarm at the possibility of exposure. The New England seaboard wanted garrisons in the Government forts, and heavy guns to guard against possible privateers. A feeling of insecurity spread along the river towns of the Ohio. The Western frontier asked for arms, to prepare in time for the Indian outbreaks likely to follow hos-

CHAP XIV

Patterson
to Towns-
end, May
23, 1861
W. R. Vol.
II, p. 646

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New York
"Tribune,"
May 8, 1861

tile conflict. And to provide these resources, the Administration had a nearly extinguished revenue and a paltry ten-million loan! Fortunately, at this point, the enthusiastic patriotism of the hour touched everything with its miraculous wand. In the fervor of these early weeks, considerations of money faded from the popular thought. The men who were willing to die for the Union, tendered it their wealth with unstinted liberality. For the three weeks ending May 8, the indirect donations for war purposes were estimated at twenty-three millions. Government credit was unbounded; and a man might as well have insulted the national flag as to have questioned the national solvency or honesty. There was no more talk of compromise and conciliation, of conventions and constitutional amendments. The universal determination of the North was well summarized by Mr. Seward in a diplomatic dispatch under date of May 4:

Seward to
Dayton,
May 4, 1861

The United States waited patiently while their authority was defied in turbulent assemblies and in seditious preparations, willing to hope that mediation, offered on all sides, would conciliate and induce the disaffected parties to return to a better mind. But the case is now altogether changed. The insurgents have instituted revolution with open, flagrant, deadly war to compel the United States to acquiesce in the dismemberment of the Union. The United States have accepted this civil war as an inevitable necessity. The constitutional remedies for all the complaints of the insurgents are still open to them and will remain so. But on the other hand, the land and naval forces of the Union have been put into activity to restore the Federal authority and to save the Union from danger.

Meanwhile the rebellion was not idle. The hotspurs of the South were eager for a sufficient

“blood-sprinkling” to arouse a crusade against the Yankees, and to cover the false pretense under which they had lured the States into secession; but the leader dreaded the test of prolonged war, and clung to the hope that the North would not fight. On March 4, the rebel War Department submitted estimates for a modest peace establishment, and on the 14th an additional army of five thousand men to reduce Fort Pickens was the only project for an active campaign. Even after Sumter, Howell Cobb declared there would be no war and advised the people that “they could go on cultivating their crops.” Letcher, as late as April 24, by proclamation counseled his gathering Virginians, not in the military service of the State, “to return to their usual avocations, in connection with the trade and commerce of the country.”

Deas to
Bragg,
Mar 14, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 449

Cobb to
Cabell,
May 28, 1861
MS

Moore,
“Rebellion
Record,”
Vol I Doc-
uments,
p. 146

Out of this long-cherished dream of “peaceable secession,” the South was for the first time fully awakened when regiment after regiment came pouring into Washington, when treason was choked in Maryland, when the Western capitals became great camps, when the blockade began to close the seaports of the South. More alarming was that increasing activity of the Northern uprising, the earnestness of which could no longer be denied nor mistaken. Justice John A. Campbell, who had by this time resigned his seat on the Supreme bench, sent Jefferson Davis an impressive warning on this point, under date of April 28, from Washington.

The Northern States are in the wildest condition of excitement. Some of the truest friends of the South have given in their adhesion to the policy of “defending the

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Campbell
to Davis,
Apr 28, 1861
MS

capital" General Pierce, General Cushing, and Mr. Dickinson will occur to you at once as men not likely to yield to a slight storm. . It seems to me that the importance of peace was never greater than for the next sixty days. . We cannot get along at all by looking only at our own side of the question, or to the emanations of our own people . The seven Confederate States have not more than double the number of male population capable of bearing arms which has been offered to this Government as volunteers since the 15th of this month New York, Boston, and Philadelphia will pour out its capital even for subjugation The impression that we had firm, stanch friends North who would fight for us was a delusion Oh! I pray you do not rest upon it

Van Dorn
to Cooper,
June 3, 1861
W R Vol
I, p 573

Ellis to
Walker,
April 24, 25,
and May 17,
1861 W R
Vol I, pp
487, 488

Though not anticipating this result, Davis had probably long since counted it among the chances of the rebellion in which he was embarked. Always possessed of great self-confidence he made a show of composure at the unwelcome prospect. For him the crisis had its encouragements as well as dangers. Half of Virginia had joined him. He yet had hopes of Maryland, and two thousand extra muskets were at Harper's Ferry to strengthen the next *émeute*. The last vestige of Union defense was gone from Texas, where Van Dorn had just compelled the surrender of the remnants of the United States forces, and also captured the famous steamship, *Star of the West*. North Carolina (though she did not formally secede till May 20) was already to all intents and purposes a member of the rebel Confederacy, and at that moment sending Jefferson Davis captured arms from the Fayetteville arsenal, and marching regiments organized under State authority. In the other four border slave States, the conspiracy was so active and strong, and so thoroughly assured was he of their

adhesion, that he had made formal requisitions on them (April 22 and 26) for regiments which should rendezvous at Lynchburg and Harper's Ferry, to help "sustain Baltimore," and make sure of Maryland. His faith was not entirely misplaced; directly and indirectly, Tennessee sent three regiments, Kentucky one, and Arkansas one, in response to his summons; Missouri replied with promises of future help. In spite of the conspiracy of their Governors and other State officers, both Kentucky and Missouri were saved to the Union; but for the moment Jefferson Davis was perhaps justified in believing that the whole South would soon be solid for the rebellion.

Under his call the rebel Congress met at Montgomery in special session, April 29, and deliberated till May 21, enacting, by the advice of himself and his Cabinet, such laws as the crisis seemed to demand. An act recognizing war and regulating privateering; acts admitting Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Arkansas to the "Confederate States"; an act authorizing a fifty-million loan, for twenty years, at eight per cent.; and an act regulating the export of cotton, require no special comment. More noteworthy was the act practically confiscating for the use of the rebellion all debts due from Southern to Northern citizens. Warily also they laid the foundation for that unsparing military despotism which their desperate enterprise demanded. In mockery of their States Rights theory, the central principle and very pivot of secession, they authorized Davis to accept and organize "companies" into regiments, regardless of any call on the States; to accept "outside" regi-

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1861.

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Statutes
at Large,
Provisional
Government,
C. 8.
A., p. 151.

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Statutes
at Large,
Provisional
Govern-
ment, C S
A, pp 124,
127

ments; and to assign Confederate officers to command State troops without displacement or loss of rank. Perhaps their most important action was a joint resolution removing the seat of government to Richmond, where on the 1st of June the rebel capital was duly established. Davis had been warned that a Union reaction was at work in Virginia; and it was doubtless intended that both the sentiment of pride and the rigor of his personal discipline should hold her steadily to the fortunes of the rebellion.

1861

Since the organization of the Montgomery Government in February, some four different calls for Southern volunteers had been made, which would yield in the aggregate 82,000 men. In his message of April 29 to the rebel Congress, Jefferson Davis proposed to organize and hold in readiness for instant action an army of 100,000;¹ making the total equal to the total of both army and navy summoned by Lincoln. The work of fortification was going on in all directions; on the sea-coast, on the Potomac, on the Mississippi. The captured forts and the Norfolk and Pensacola navy-yards had furnished them an abundance of heavy guns; the six or eight captured arsenals supplied them

¹ Already in South Carolina	5,000
Requisitions for volunteers by Confederate Govern- ment, March 9, 1861	8,000
April 8, "	20,000
April 16, "	34,000
After April 16, "	15,000
	<hr/>
	82,000
Cooper to Walker, Apr 25, 1861	Number proposed in Jefferson Davis's Message of April 29, 1861
	100,000
	<hr/>
	Total
	182,000

with 18,650 rifles and 145,154 muskets — the latter inferior arms, it is true, but yet effective if well used. In addition several States had made separate purchases. The martial spirit was up, and paper regiments were becoming real ones. There was an occasional ebullition of impatience and insubordination from Southern Governors; but the farcical republics of South Carolina and other Cotton commonwealths were things of the past, and the "Confederate States of America" pretended to an empire of territory, and no mean nation of inhabitants. Jefferson Davis had been orator, statesman, soldier, and Secretary of War; had practiced the art of government, and seen something of the operation of armies. He was cold, cynical, ambitious; but had talent, experience, energy, and an indomitable will. He was now virtual dictator of the South, and understood the crushing, fusing, welding power of military rule. We must assume that under these favoring conditions he believed in the success he predicted — that since he had matured his conspiracy he would establish his Government.

CHAP XIV
Ripley to
Lincoln,
July 4, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, pp
355, 356

CHAPTER XV

EUROPEAN NEUTRALITY

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ONE of the gravest doubts which beset the Lincoln Administration on its advent to power was how foreign nations would deal with the fact of secession and rebellion in the United States; and the people of the North endured a grievous disappointment when they found that England and France were by active sympathy favorable to the South. This result does not seem strange when we consider by what insensible steps the news from America had shaped their opinion.

Europeans were at first prepared to accept the disunion threats of Southern leaders as mere transient party bravado. The non-coercion message of President Buchanan, however, was in their eyes an indication of serious import. Old World statesmanship had no faith in unsupported public sentiment as a lasting bond of nationality. The experience of a thousand years taught them that, under their monarchical system, governments and laws by "divine right" were of accepted and permanent force only when competent physical power stood behind them to compel obedience. Mr. Buchanan's dogma that the Federal Government had no authority to keep a State in the Union was to them, in theory at least, the end of the Govern-

ment of the United States. When, further, they saw that this theory was being translated into practice by acquiescence in South Carolina's revolt; by the failure to reenforce Sumter; by the President's quasi-diplomacy with the South Carolina commissioners as foreign agents; and finally by his practical abdication of executive functions, in the message of January 8, referring the whole subject to Congress, and throwing upon it all "the responsibility,"—they naturally concluded that the only remaining question for them was one of new relations with the divided States.

CHAP XV
"Globe,"
Jan 9, 1861,
pp 294, 295

From the election of Lincoln until three days preceding his inauguration, a period of nearly four months, embracing the whole drama of public secession and the organization of the Montgomery Confederacy, not a word of information, explanation, or protest on these momentous proceedings was sent by the Buchanan Cabinet to foreign powers. They were left to draw their inferences exclusively from newspapers, the debates of Congress, and the President's messages till the last day of February, 1861, when Secretary Black, in a diplomatic circular, instructed our ministers at foreign courts that "this Government has not relinquished its constitutional jurisdiction within the territory of those [seceded] States and does not desire to do so," and that a recognition of their independence must be opposed. France and England replied courteously that they would not act in haste, but quite emphatically that they could give no further binding promise.

Mr. Seward, on assuming the duties of Secretary of State, immediately transmitted a circular, re-

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"Message
and Docu-
ments,"
1861-62
Part I, p
84

peating the injunction of his predecessor and stating the confidence of the President in the speedy restoration of the harmony and unity of the Government. Considerable delay occurred in settling upon the various foreign appointments. The new minister to France, William L. Dayton, and the new minister to Great Britain, Charles Francis Adams, did not sail for Europe till about the first of May. Before either of them arrived at his post, both governments had violated in spirit their promise to act in no haste. On the day Mr. Adams sailed from Boston, his predecessor, G. M. Dallas, yet in London, was sent for by Lord John Russell, her Britannic Majesty's Minister of Foreign Affairs. "He told me," wrote Mr. Dallas, "that the three representatives of the Southern Confederacy were here; that he had not seen them, but was not unwilling to do so, *unofficially*; that there existed an understanding between this Government and that of France which would lead both to take the same course as to recognition, whatever that course might be."

The step here foreshadowed was soon taken. Three days later Lord John Russell did receive the three representatives of the Southern Confederacy; and while he told them he could not communicate with them "officially," his language indicated that when the South could maintain its position England would not be unwilling to hear what terms they had to propose. When Mr. Adams landed in England he found, evidently to forestall his arrival, that the Ministry had published the Queen's proclamation of neutrality, raising the Confederate States at once to the

position and privilege of a belligerent power; and France soon followed the example. CHAP. XV.

In taking this precipitate action, both nations probably thought it merely a preliminary step; the British ministers believed disunion to be complete and irrevocable, and were eager to take advantage of it to secure free trade and cheap cotton; while Napoleon III., Emperor of the French, already harboring far-reaching colonial designs, expected not only to recognize the South, but to assist her at no distant day by an armed intervention. For the present, of course, all such meditations were veiled under the bland phraseology of diplomatic regret at our misfortune. The object of these pages is, however, not so much to discuss international relations as to show the part taken by President Lincoln in framing the dispatch which announced the answering policy of the United States.

When the communication which Lord John Russell made to Mr. Dallas was received at the State Department, the unfriendly act of the English Government, and more especially the half-insulting manner of its promulgation, filled Mr. Seward with indignation. In this mood he wrote a dispatch to Mr. Adams, which, if transmitted and delivered in its original form, could hardly have failed to endanger the peaceful relations of the two countries. The general tone and spirit of the paper were admirable; but portions of it were phrased with an exasperating bluntness, and certain directions were lacking in diplomatic prudence. This can be accounted for only by the irritation under which he wrote. It was Mr. Seward's ordinary habit per-

CHAP XV sonally to read his dispatches to the President before sending them. Mr. Lincoln, detecting the defects of the paper, retained it, and after careful scrutiny made such material corrections and alterations with his own hand as took from it all offensive crudeness without in the least lowering its tone, but, on the contrary, greatly increasing its dignity.

SEWARD'S ORIGINAL DISPATCH, SHOWING MR. LINCOLN'S
CORRECTIONS

[All words by Lincoln in margin or in text are in *italics* All matter
between brackets was marked out]

No 10

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
WASHINGTON, May 21, 1861

SIR

Mr Dallas in a brief dispatch of May 2d (No 333) tells us that Lord John Russell recently requested an interview with him on account of the solicitude which His Lordship felt concerning the effect of certain measures represented as likely to be adopted by the President. In that conversation the British Secretary told Mr Dallas that the three representatives of the Southern Confederacy were then in London, that Lord John Russell had not yet seen them, but that he was not unwilling to see them unofficially. He farther informed Mr Dallas that an understanding exists between the British and French Governments which would lead both to take one and the same course as to recognition. His Lordship then referred to the rumor of a meditated blockade by us of Southern ports, and a discontinuance of them as ports of entry. Mr Dallas answered that he knew nothing on those topics and therefore could say nothing. He added that you were expected to arrive in two weeks. Upon this statement Lord John Russell acquiesced in the expediency of waiting for the full knowledge you were expected to bring.

Mr. Dallas transmitted to us some newspaper reports of Ministerial explanations made in Parliament.

You will base no proceedings on parliamentary debates farther than to seek explanations when necessary and communicate them to this Department [We intend to have a clear and simple record of whatever issue may arise between us and Great Britain]

The President [is surprised and grieved] *regrets* that Mr Dallas did not protest against the proposed unofficial intercourse between the British Government and the missionaries of the insurgents [as well as against the demand for explanations made by the British Government]. It is due however to Mr Dallas to say that our instructions had been given only to you and not to him, and that his loyalty and fidelity, too rare in these times [among our late representatives abroad are confessed and], *are* appreciated.

Intercourse of any kind with the so-called Commissioners is liable to be construed as a recognition of the authority which appointed them. Such intercourse would be none the less [wrongful] *hurtful* to us for being called unofficial, and it might be even more injurious, because we should have no means of knowing what points might be resolved by it. Moreover, unofficial intercourse is useless and meaningless, if it is not expected to ripen into official intercourse and direct recognition. It is left doubtful here whether the proposed unofficial intercourse has yet actually begun. Your own [present] antecedent instructions are deemed explicit enough, and it is hoped that you have not misunderstood them. You will in any event desist from all intercourse whatever, unofficial as well as official with the British Government, so long as it shall continue intercourse of either kind with the domestic enemies of this country, [confining yourself simply to a delivery of a copy of this paper to the Secretary of State. After doing this] *When intercourse shall have been arrested for this cause* you will communicate with this Department and receive farther directions.

Lord John Russell has informed us of an understanding between the British and French Governments that they will act together in regard to our affairs. This communication however loses something of its value from the circumstance that the communication was withheld until after knowledge of the fact had been acquired

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Leave out.

Leave out, because it does not appear that such explanations were demanded
Leave out.

Leave out

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by us from other sources We know also another fact that has not yet been officially communicated to us, namely, that other European States are apprized by France and England of their agreement and are expected to concur with or follow them in whatever measures they adopt on the subject of recognition The United States have been impartial and just in all their conduct towards the several nations of Europe They will not complain however of the combination now announced by the two leading powers, although they think they had a right to expect a more independent if not a more friendly course from each of them You will take no notice of that or any other alliance Whenever the European governments shall see fit to communicate directly with us we shall be as heretofore frank and explicit in our reply

As to the blockade, you will say that by [the] *our own* laws [of nature] and *the laws* of nature and the laws of nations this government has a clear right to suppress insurrection An exclusion of commerce from national ports which have been seized by the insurgents, in the equitable form of blockade, is the proper means to that end. You will [admit] not insist that our blockade is [not] to be respected if it be not maintained by a competent force — but passing by that question as not now a practical or at least an urgent one you will add that [it] the blockade is now and it will continue to be so maintained, and therefore we expect it to be respected by Great Britain You will add that we have already revoked the *exequatur* of a Russian Consul who had enlisted in the Military service of the insurgents, and we shall dismiss or demand the recall of every foreign agent, Consular or Diplomatic, who shall either disobey the Federal laws or disown the Federal authority

As to the recognition of the so-called Southern Confederacy it is not to be made a subject of technical definition It is of course [*quasi*] direct recognition to publish an acknowledgment of the sovereignty and independence of a new power It is [*quasi*] direct recognition to receive its ambassadors, Ministers, agents, or commissioners officially. A concession of belligerent rights is liable to be construed as a recognition of them No one of these pro-

ceedings will [be borne] *pass* [*unnoticed*] unquestioned by the United States in this case

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Hitherto recognition has been moved only on the assumption that the so-called Confederate States are de facto a self-sustaining power. Now after long forbearance, designed to soothe discontent and avert the need of civil war, the land and naval forces of the United States have been put in motion to repress the insurrection. The true character of the pretended new State is at once revealed. It is seen to be a Power existing in pronouncement only. It has never won a field. It has obtained no forts that were not virtually betrayed into its hands or seized in breach of trust. It commands not a single port on the coast nor any highway out from its pretended Capital by land. Under these circumstances Great Britain is called upon to intervene and give it body and independence by resisting our measures of suppression. British recognition would be British intervention to create within our own territory a hostile state by overthrowing this Republic itself. [When this act of intervention is distinctly performed, we from that hour shall cease to be friends and become once more, as we have twice before been forced to be, enemies of Great Britain.]

*Leave
out.*

As to the treatment of privateers in the insurgent service, you will say that this is a question exclusively our own. We treat them as pirates. They are our own citizens, or persons employed by our citizens, preying on the commerce of our country. If Great Britain shall choose to recognize them as lawful belligerents, and give them shelter from our pursuit and punishment, the laws of nations afford an adequate and proper remedy, [and we shall avail ourselves of it. *And while you need not to say this in advance, be sure that you say nothing inconsistent with it*]

Happily, however, Her Britannic Majesty's Government can avoid all these difficulties. It invited us in 1856 to accede to the declaration of the Congress of Paris, of which body Great Britain was herself a member, abolishing privateering everywhere in all cases and forever. You *already* have our authority to propose to her our accession to that declaration. If she

CHAP XV refuse to receive it, it can only be because she is willing to become the patron of privateering when aimed at our devastation.

These positions are not elaborately defended now, because to vindicate them would imply a possibility of our waiving them

Drop all from this line to the end, and in lieu of it write, "This paper is for your own guidance only, and not [sic] to be read or shown to any one"

We are not insensible of the grave importance of this occasion. We see how, upon the result of the debate in which we are engaged, a war may ensue between the United States, and one, two, or even more European nations. War in any case is as exceptionable from the habits as it is revolting from the sentiments of the American people. But if it come it will be fully seen that it results from the action of Great Britain, not our own, that Great Britain will have decided to fraternize with our domestic enemy, either without waiting to hear from you our remonstrances, and our warnings, or after having heard them. War in defense of national life is not immoral, and war in defense of independence is an inevitable part of the discipline of nations.

The dispute will be between the European and the American branches of the British race. All who belong to that race will especially deprecate it, as they ought. It may well be believed that men of every race and kindred will deplore it. A war not unlike it between the same parties occurred at the close of the last century. Europe atoned by forty years of suffering for the error that Great Britain committed in provoking that contest. If that nation shall now repeat the same great error the social convulsions which will follow may not be so long but they will be more general. When they shall have ceased, it will, we think, be seen, whatever may have been the fortunes of other nations, that it is not the United States that will have come out of them with its precious Constitution altered or its honestly obtained dominion in any degree abridged. Great Britain has but to wait a few months and all her present inconveniences will cease with all our own troubles. If she take a different course she will calculate for herself the ultimate as well as the immediate consequences, and will consider what position she will hold when she shall have forever lost the sympathies and the affections of the

only nation on whose sympathies and affections she has a natural claim. In making that calculation she will do well to remember that in the controversy she proposes to open we shall be actuated by neither pride, nor passion, nor cupidity, nor ambition; but we shall stand simply on the principle of self preservation, and that our cause will involve the independence of nations, and the rights of human nature.

I am, Sir, respectfully, your obedient servant,

W H S

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS, Esq., etc., etc., etc

It is quite impossible to reproduce in type the exact form of the manuscript of the dispatch with all its interlineations and corrections; but the foregoing shows those made by Mr. Lincoln. Such additional verbal alterations of Mr. Seward's as merely corrected ordinary slips of the pen or errors of the copyist are not noted. When the President returned the manuscript to his hands, Mr. Seward somewhat changed the form of the dispatch by prefixing to it two short introductory paragraphs in which he embodied, in his own phraseology, the President's direction that the paper was to be merely a confidential instruction not to be read or shown to any one, and that he should not in advance say anything inconsistent with its spirit. This also rendered unnecessary the President's direction to omit the last two paragraphs, and accordingly they remained in the dispatch as finally sent.

The mere perusal of this document shows how ill advised was Mr. Seward's original direction to deliver a copy of it to the British foreign office without further explanation, or without requesting a reply in a limited time. Such a course would have left the American minister in a position of

CHAP XV uncertainty whether he was still in diplomatic relations or not, and whether the point had been reached which would justify him in breaking off intercourse; nor would he have had any further pretext upon which to ascertain the disposition and intention of the British Government. It would have been wiser to close the legation at once and return to America. Happily, Mr. Lincoln saw the weak point of the instruction, and by his changes not only kept it within the range of personal and diplomatic courtesy, but left Mr. Adams free to choose for himself the best way of managing the delicate situation.

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The main point in question, namely, that the United States would not suffer Great Britain to carry on a double diplomacy with Washington and with Montgomery at the same time—that if she became the active friend of the rebellion she must become the enemy of the United States, was partly disposed of before the arrival of the amended dispatch at London. Several days before it was written Mr. Adams had his first official interview (May 18) with Lord John Russell, and in the usual formal phraseology, but with emphatic distinctness, told him that if there existed on the part of Great Britain “an intention more or less marked to extend the struggle” by encouragement in any form to the rebels, “I was bound to acknowledge in all frankness that in that contingency I had nothing further left to do in Great Britain.” The British minister denied any intention to aid the rebellion, and explained that the Queen’s proclamation was issued merely to define their own attitude of strict neutrality, so that British naval

officers and other officials might understand how to regulate their conduct.

When the dispatch finally reached Mr. Adams, he obtained another interview with Lord John Russell, to ascertain definitely the status of the rebel commissioners in London, and told him that a continuance of their apparent relation with the British Government "could scarcely fail to be viewed by us as hostile in spirit, and to require some corresponding action accordingly." Lord John Russell replied that he had only seen the rebel commissioners twice, and "had no expectation of seeing them any more."

So early as the year 1854, when the shadow of the Crimean war was darkening over Europe, the Government of the United States submitted to the principal maritime nations the propositions, first, that free ships should make free goods, and second, that neutral property on board an enemy's vessel should not be subject to confiscation unless contraband of war. These propositions were not immediately accepted, but when the powers assembled in congress at Paris in 1856, for the purpose of making peace, Great Britain and the other nations that took part in the congress gave them their assent. The rules originally suggested by the United States became the second and third clauses of the Declaration of Paris; the abolition of privateering was prefixed to them as the first clause, and the provision that blockades to be binding must be effective was added as a fourth.

The adhesion of the United States having been invited to these four propositions, the Government of that day answered that they would accede to

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Adams to
Seward,
May 21, 1861
"Message
and Docu-
ments,"
1861-62
Part I, p
93

Ibid., June
14, 1861
"Message
and Docu-
ments,"
1861-62
Part I, p
104

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them if the other powers would accept a fifth principle—that the goods of private persons, non-combatants, should be exempt from confiscation in maritime war. This proposition was rejected by the British Government, and the negotiations were then suspended until after Mr. Lincoln became President. A few weeks after his inauguration the suspended negotiations were taken up by Mr. Seward, who directed Mr. Adams to signify to the British Government that the United States were now ready to accept without reserve the four propositions adopted at the Congress of Paris.¹

After some delay, Lord John Russell remarked to Mr. Adams that in case of the adhesion of the United States to the Declaration of Paris, the engagement on the part of Great Britain would be prospective and would not invalidate anything done. This singular reserve Mr. Adams reported to his Government, and was directed by Mr. Seward to ask some further elucidation of its meaning. But before this dispatch was received, the strange attitude of the British Government was explained by Earl Russell's² submitting to Mr. Adams a draft of a supplementary declaration on the part of England that her Majesty did not intend, by the projected convention for the accession of the United States to the articles of the Congress of Paris, "to undertake any engagement which shall have any bearing, direct or indirect, on the internal differences now prevailing in the United States." The

¹ The details of this correspondence may be found in Mr Seward's dispatch to Mr Adams, April 24, 1861, Seward to Adams, August 17, 1861, and "Papers relating to the Treaty of Washington," Vol I., p 33 *et seq.*

² Lord John Russell was raised to the peerage, under the title of Earl Russell, July 30, 1861.

President, having been informed of this proposed declaration, at once instructed Mr. Adams that it was inadmissible, as the Government of the United States could not accede to this great international act except on the same footing upon which all the other parties stood.

CHAP XV
Seward to
Adams,
Sept 7, 1861
"Message
and Docu-
ments,"
1861-62
Part I pp
141-143

It afterwards transpired that the British Government had, at the same time that these important negotiations were going on with the Government of the United States, approached the Confederate Government upon the same subject, sending communications in a clandestine manner through the British Legation in Washington to Mr. Bunch, the English consul at Charleston, through whom they were in the same furtive and unofficial manner laid before the authorities at Richmond. The French Government joined in this proceeding, at the invitation of England. Mr. Davis at once recognized the great importance of such quasi-recognition of his Government, and he himself drafted resolutions declaring the purpose of the Confederates to observe the principles towards neutrals embodied in the second, third, and fourth rules of the Declaration of Paris — but that they "maintained the right of privateering." These resolutions were passed in the Confederate Congress, and Mr. Bunch, conveying the news of this result to Lord Lyons, said :

"Papers re-
lating to
the Treaty
of Washing-
ton," Vol
I, p 36

The wishes of her Majesty's Government would seem to have been fully complied with, for as no proposal was made that the Confederate Government should abolish privateering, it could not be expected that they should do so of their own accord, particularly as it is the arm upon which they most rely for the injury of the extended commerce of their enemy

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The American Government held itself justly aggrieved, therefore, that its accession to the Declaration of Paris was impeded by conditions which it could not, consistently with its dignity, accept; that the British Government was secretly negotiating at the same time with the insurgents upon the same subject; that while the United States were invited to accede to all four of the articles of Paris the Confederate Government was given its choice by the British Cabinet to accept only three. The Government of the United States said afterwards in its case at Geneva that

The practical effect of this diplomacy, had it been successful, would have been the destruction of the commerce of the United States or its transfer to the British flag, and the loss of the principal resource of the United States upon the ocean should a continuation of this course of insincere neutrality unhappily force the United States into a war. Great Britain was thus to gain the benefit to its neutral commerce of the recognition of the second and third articles, the rebel privateers and cruisers were to be protected and their devastation legalized, while the United States were to be deprived of a dangerous weapon of assault upon Great Britain.

The action of Mr. Bunch in this matter was properly regarded by the President as a violation of the laws of the United States to which he was accredited, and his exequatur was revoked. A long discussion followed, in which neither side succeeded in convincing the other of its wrong; and the next year, pending an attack upon Charleston, a British man-of-war entered that port and took Mr. Bunch away.

CHAPTER XVI

McCLELLAN AND GRANT

THE city of Cincinnati, lying nearly midway of the Ohio line, counting then a population of 161,000 souls, was one of the first points to become uneasy under the prospect of having its citizens and property exposed to the risks and ravages of war. In that city, on Sunday, the 21st of April, a gentleman came about church-time to the house of Rutherford B. Hayes, afterwards President of the United States, but then a young gentleman of fortune holding the office of city attorney, and consequently both active and influential in politics and society, and invited him to attend a consultation of leading citizens at the Burnett House, in reference to war matters. Mr. Hayes immediately complied with the request. The assemblage was comparatively small, but those present, perhaps not more than a dozen altogether, represented the wealth and leadership of the city. The meeting was non-partisan, and its deliberations touched only the pressing questions of the hour.¹ The

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¹ These details were obtained in a conversation with President Hayes in December, 1880. Of the party elements of the meeting described, he said "Those present were, if I remember aright, mostly Democrats, though there were also one or two Bell and Everett men, and I think, besides myself, but two active members of the Republican party."

CHAP XVI danger and defense of the city were talked over; it was urged that professional talent and experience were needed in the organization of troops, and that these qualifications could now be had in the person of Captain George B. McClellan, residing in the city and discharging the duties of president of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad, a direct line between Cincinnati and St. Louis. His military education was represented as being thorough, and the record of his services both in the army and in civil life as being exceptionally good. A dispatch was read showing that a call had been made for him from some other State—perhaps Pennsylvania—offering him the command of the troops to be organized there, and it was urged that instead of allowing him to go elsewhere his services in this emergency should be secured to Ohio and particularly to Cincinnati. A telegram signed by influential names was directed to the authorities at Washington strongly recommending him to be immediately intrusted with the local command and defense.¹

For the moment the Baltimore rioters had broken direct telegraphic communication; and when the dispatch reached its destination by a circuitous route, it was supplemented by a message of similar import from a prominent citizen of New York to General Scott. These telegrams, in the momentary isolation of the capital of the Union from all the outside world, could only be forwarded by mail or special messenger from New York via Annapolis, arriving in Washington on the 23d of April;

W H As-
pinwall to
Gen Scott,
Apr 21, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
123

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¹ "People of Cincinnati wish
Captain McClellan to be appointed to organize forces and take command at Cincinnati — Will-

iam J Flagg, S F Vinton, W S Groesbeck, L Anderson, Rutherford B Hayes, George E. Pugh." MS

and even then no quick response could be transmitted. "I have had no communication from Washington since Friday last," wrote Governor Dennison of Ohio on Monday, April 22. "The result is that I am compelled to assume extraordinary responsibilities in connection with the troops."

CHAP XVI
Dennison to
Cameron,
Apr 22 1861
W P
Series III,
Vol I, P
125

Telegrams of recommendation similar to that quoted were also probably sent from Cincinnati to Governor Dennison at Columbus, the capital of Ohio. Like all the governors of the Northern States, he was in urgent need of educated and experienced officers; and one possessed of the qualifications of Captain McClellan could not fail to receive high appreciation. He was in the very prime of early manhood, being only thirty-five years of age; but in his brief career he had enjoyed such special distinction that it will bear enumeration with some detail.

George B. McClellan, born in 1826, reared and educated in Philadelphia, was graduated from the National Military Academy at West Point, in 1846. In September of that year he sailed to join the army then engaged in the conquest of Mexico. Assigned to duty in the engineer corps, he served in the column which General Scott led in person from Vera Cruz to the Mexican capital. In this campaign McClellan's gallantry won him the brevets of first lieutenant and captain. Returned home after the war, he was, partly because of his talent and efficiency, and partly because his culture, tact, and good fortune enabled him always to command a large social and personal influence, intrusted with a brilliant succession of special duties.

CHAP XVI He prepared a manual of bayonet exercise, from the French of Gomard, which was officially printed and used in the army. He accompanied Captain Marcy in an exploration of the Upper Red River, making the astronomical observations, and superintending a collection in natural history. Then he was sent to make surveys for harbor improvement on the Texan coast. Next, he was ordered to conduct one of the Pacific Railroad surveys in the western part of Washington Territory. This completed, he was stationed awhile at Washington City to prepare a memoir on railroad construction. While engaged in this duty he was sent on a secret mission to select a coaling station in the West Indies. Finally he was appointed a member of a commission of officers to gather military information in Europe, which afforded him the opportunity to witness and report upon the operations of war in the Crimea, then in progress. He resigned his army commission as a captain of artillery in 1857, to accept the post of chief engineer of the Illinois Central Railroad; was chosen its vice-president in 1858; and was elected president of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad in 1860, at which duty the opening of the Rebellion found him.

These various services and merits were well known to the General-in-Chief and to leading army officers; and could he have communicated with the Governor of Ohio, Scott would doubtless have responded to the solicitation of the Cincinnati committee and returned a warm indorsement. In the absence of this, Governor Dennison seems to have been fully informed from other sources; for when next the Government heard from Ohio, Cap-

tain McClellan had been commissioned by the Governor as major-general, and thus placed in command of the whole quota assigned to that State, consisting of thirteen regiments of three months' militia, a small army in itself. To rise at once in rank from a captaincy to a major-generalship—from the command of one hundred men to the command of ten thousand—is an event that deserves to be classed among the extravagances of fiction rather than the prosaic possibilities of our modern life; yet the War of the Rebellion furnished a number of parallel or approximate instances, for to the armies that rose at the President's call, as by the sweep of an enchanter's wand, general officers were as indispensable as muskets.

General Scott was more than gratified that a commander of such promise had been placed in control of the leading Western contingent, and in a letter dated April 30 expressed his pleasure in words of warm approbation. Honors seemed destined to fall upon McClellan in showers. He scarcely had time to receive the congratulations of his Cincinnati friends, when the Administration at Washington (May 3) created the military "Department of the Ohio," consisting of the States of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, and assigned him to its command. When on May 13 he wrote his first general order, in which he acknowledged this new trust as a "distinguished honor," he probably little thought fortune was soon to crown him with another wreath. On the next day the Washington authorities, impelled by the same needs which had justified the action of the Governor of Ohio, appointed McClellan, under the reorganization of the

CHAP XVI
Townsend
to McClel-
lan, April
30, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p.
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Thomas,
Order,
June 6, 1861
W R Vol
III, p 384

regulais then in progress, a major-general of the United States army, which changed his three months' militia commission to one of permanent service. Swiftly following this, on June 6 his department was enlarged by the addition of the State of Missouri, and portions of western Pennsylvania and Virginia. For the moment this new investment of authority, however, left still on his hands the work he had been called to do as a militia general. His primary task was to organize, equip, and discipline the quotas of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois for the field, and to this duty he applied himself with zeal and industry, and with an aptitude that no other officer has excelled. Leaving him at this occupation for a time, we must briefly sketch the advent of another officer, also destined to prominence in the War of the Rebellion.

At Springfield, the capital of the State of Illinois, the Legislature was convened in special session, and companies and regiments were, in response to the President's proclamation and the Governor's call, thronging to the rendezvous at Camp Yates, located on the old State fair ground adjoining the city. Among these, a company from the city of Galena, in northwestern Illinois, had reached Springfield on April 23, under the temporary management of one Captain Grant, not its own commander, but who was giving it such hasty instruction as his evident knowledge and experience rendered of great momentary utility; for the most urgent calls for reenforcements were coming to the Governor from Cairo, from St. Louis, and from other points in Missouri. The company was soon

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mustered into service (April 27), and thus passed under the control of its own proper officer, Captain Augustus L. Chetlain. CHAP XVI

In his "Memoirs" Grant relates somewhat differently from other versions how his military service in the War of the Rebellion began. When the first Galena company was raised, he was present at the meeting, and was offered the captaincy, but declined it—he does not state the reason why; nevertheless he offered to assist in its organization and drill, and, as has been stated, accompanied it to Springfield for that purpose. Four days after its arrival it was mustered into service and its own captain took charge of it, thus relieving Grant from his temporary command. Living at the same hotel, Governor Yates's attention had probably been called to Grant as a man possessed of the military knowledge and experience so useful at that moment, and, learning that he was about to return to Galena, the Governor asked him to stay and give the adjutant-general suggestions and assistance in the details of organization. Grant consented, and was assigned to duties which were probably rather those of a general adviser than of either a routine clerk or bureau chief. He says of it himself: "My old army experience I found, indeed, of very great service. I was no clerk, nor had I any capacity to become one. The only place I ever found in my life to put a paper so as to find it again was either a side coat-pocket or the hands of a clerk or secretary more careful than myself. But I had been quartermaster, commissary, and adjutant in the field. The army forms were familiar to me, and I could direct how they should be made out.

CHAP. XVI. There was a clerk in the office of the adjutant-general who supplied my deficiencies."

Grant,
"Personal
Memoirs,"
Vol. I., p.
233.

Ibid., p. 232.

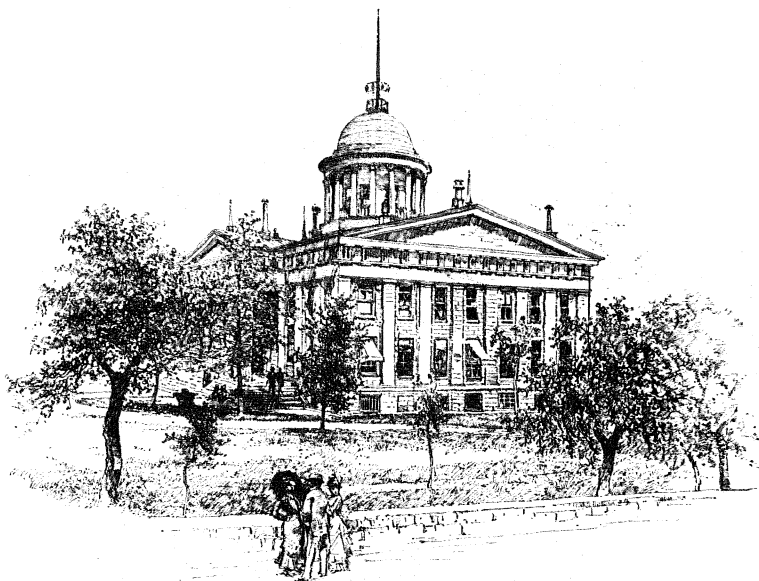
The first call upon Illinois was for six regiments only of State militia to serve three months. These were quickly organized and sent to the front; but the offer of volunteers had been so great that the Legislature authorized the temporary enlistment of ten additional regiments for one month, pledged to enter the United States service should there be a further call during their term. These were to assemble in various camps throughout the State, and the Governor sent Grant to muster them into the State service. Waiting for one of these regiments to assemble, he used a few days' leisure thus afforded him to visit his old home at St. Louis, where he witnessed the capture of Camp Jackson on the 10th of May.

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Grant,
"Personal
Memoirs,"
Vol. I., p.
231.

Ibid., p. 232.

Grant's own narrative shows that he was engaged in these subordinate staff duties, mainly at the capital of Illinois, about one month, and it shows us the curious fact that during this whole time, amid the prevailing excitement, enthusiasm, and ambition, he did not once manifest a desire to enter active field service. This could not have been entirely from neglect or that he was unknown. He tells us that he declined the captaincy of the Galena company; also that during this period Captain (afterwards Major-General) John Pope — his fellow-cadet at West Point and his fellow-officer in the Mexican war — was on military duty at Springfield, and not only urged him to seek a command, but offered to assist him with his recommendation and influence, which offer was also declined. Grant hints that this whole month's dis-



ILLINOIS STATE-HOUSE IN WHICH MR. LINCOLN HAD HIS OFFICE DURING
HIS PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN.

inclination arose from his disbelief that there was going to be a war, a disbelief difficult to understand in view of the President's calls of April 15 and May 3, for more than 150,000 soldiers. CHAP XVI
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Finally, however, all this patriotic enthusiasm and military movement, proclamations, calls, enlistment, mustering, the legislative stir at Springfield, the bloodshed at Camp Jackson, the formation of hostile lines at the front, the voice of war from all parts of the country, stirred Grant's blood. He tells us that a day or two after his conversation with Captain Pope he went home to Galena, and probably brought to the contemplation of the dullness of the occupation of keeping the leather store in which he was engaged and to which he must soon return, he sat down while there and wrote the following letter to the War Department at Washington:

GALENA, ILL., May 24, 1861

SIR Having served for fifteen years in the regular army, including four years at West Point, and feeling it the duty of every one who has been educated at the Government expense to offer their services for the support of that Government, I have the honor, very respectfully, to tender my services until the close of the war in such capacity as may be offered. I would say, in view of my present age and length of service, I feel myself competent to command a regiment if the President, in his judgment, should see fit to intrust one to me. Since the first call of the President, I have been serving on the staff of the Governor of this State, rendering such aid as I could in the organization of our State militia, and am still engaged in that capacity. A letter addressed to me at Springfield, Ill., will reach me.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

COLONEL L. THOMAS,

U S GRANT

A. G., U. S. Army, Washington, D. C.

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Grant,
"Personal
Memoirs"
Vol I., pp.
239, 240

CHAP XVI

This letter, it will be observed, was sent to the Adjutant-General of the United States Army. But the various bureaus and staff-officers of the War Department at Washington were as busy and as much disorganized by the sudden expansion of military affairs and duties as the Governor's improvised military headquarters at Springfield, or those at any other capital of the larger States. It followed that, although there was a universal demand for educated and experienced officers, Grant's application went no further than the first convenient pigeon-hole. His offer deserved a better fate. Personal recollection of his military service was of course dimmed, if not obliterated, in the minds of his compeers, by a ten years' interval of peace, but a reference to the records ought to have recalled his standing and qualifications.

Ulysses S. Grant, born in 1822 at Point Pleasant, Ohio, and receiving only a slight country schooling, had graduated at the Government military school at West Point, in the year 1843, standing twenty-first in a graduating class of thirty-nine. He became a supernumerary second lieutenant in the Fourth United States Infantry, and went to the Western frontier. His regiment was sent to the Mexican war in 1845, and he took part in every battle of that war except Buena Vista. Having aided in General Taylor's preliminary campaign, the regiment joined the command of General Scott, making the entire campaign from Vera Cruz to the city of Mexico. In 1847 he was made quartermaster of the regiment, continuing, however, to take part in all active operations. His service shows an unbroken record not only of satisfactory

duty on the regimental staff but of special gallantry in action. September 8 of that year he was appointed first lieutenant on the field, for having led one of the daring and successful storming parties against Molino del Ray. September 13 he joined in another storming assault which carried a breastwork on the field of Chapultepec; this gained him special mention in the colonel's report, and a captain's brevet to date from the battle. With the return of peace, he accompanied his regiment to various stations, and finally quitted the army by resignation July 31, 1854, having reached the grade of full captain August 5, 1853. CHAP XVI

Grant's civil pursuits do not seem to have been followed by the same success which attended his military career. He chose his home near St. Louis, Missouri, where he undertook the cultivation of a farm, and afterwards engaged in business as partner in a real estate agency. But these callings brought him no prosperity; they did not even sufficiently provide for his family. In this dilemma he applied to his father, who owned a controlling interest in a leather store at the town of Galena, Illinois. The father, though still the principal proprietor, had retired from the active charge of this business, fixing his residence at Covington, Kentucky, and had devolved its labors and management upon two of his sons, younger brothers of Ulysses. Thus there was brought about a prudential family arrangement, under which the ex-captain, with his wife and four children, moved to Galena in the spring of 1860, and assisted in the business of the firm, at a salary first of six hundred, and subsequently eight hun-

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Albert D
Richard-
son, "Per-
sonal His-
tory of U
S Grant,"
p 175

dred, dollars a year; and in December of that year he wrote: "I hope to be a partner soon, and am sanguine that a competency at least can be made out of the business." This was his occupation when, at the age of thirty-nine years, the coming civil war called him to Springfield.

The turning point of Grant's life came while he was on a week's visit to his father in Covington, Kentucky (which lies directly across the river from, and is really a suburb of, Cincinnati), "in the early part of June," 1861. From what little can be gathered, his fortune at this time was a drifting bark. One of his biographers, speaking on this point by authority, says: "Grant went to Cincinnati to visit Major-General McClellan, then in command of Ohio volunteers. The two had known each other in the old army, and although Grant had no intention of making any application, he still hoped that McClellan might offer him a place on his staff. He went twice to headquarters, but did not find McClellan there, and returned to Illinois without mentioning his aspirations to any one." Matters were in this state, and his chances seemed to lie in a choice between inaction on the one hand and obscure routine drudgery on the other, when a telegram reached him from Governor Yates offering to appoint him colonel of the Twenty-first Illinois Volunteers, one of the newly called three-years' regiments. He sent a prompt acceptance and hastened to Springfield.

Adam
Badeau,
"Military
History of
U S
Grant,"
pp 9, 10

Henry C.
Deming,
"Life of U
S Grant,"
p 100

In the absence of recorded historical proof as to how Grant's promotion happened, we must turn to local tradition, which will at least give us a generally accurate picture of the spirit and conditions of this initial war period; and the following is

gathered from a verbal recital of eye-witnesses and prominent actors in the events described. CHAP XVI

Troops were coming in under the call, and among others a very full regiment from the Seventh Congressional District;¹ fine men, but in a state of half mutiny through a quarrel among themselves over the selection of their colonel. They were marched to Camp Yates, where the Nineteenth Illinois was charged with the almost impossible task of keeping them in camp. There were plenty of "political colonels" about Springfield, but these were all afraid of the insubordinate recruits, and the Governor and State officers were at their wits' end what to do with them, when some one suggested that the colonelcy be given to Grant, whom Washburne had warmly recommended. The suggestion was freely discussed, and under the stress of necessity adopted. It would, at all events, shift the responsibility of the bad behavior of the men from the officials' shoulders to those of some one else, and if Grant were broken down and disgraced under the load, no very valuable material would be wasted.

In this spirit, a telegram was dispatched to Covington tendering Grant the command. A prompt response came back: "I accept the regiment and will start immediately." By the Monday noon train came the new-made colonel, and at once went out to Camp Yates, in company with the State officials, to

¹ "Twenty-first Infantry, Illinois Volunteers The Seventh Congressional District Regiment was organized at Mattoon, Illinois, on the 9th of May, 1861 On the 15th of May it was mustered into the State service for thirty days, by Captain U S Grant. On the 28th of June it was mustered into the United States service by Captain Pitcher, U S A, with Captain U S Grant as colonel"—Report, Adj-Gen of Illinois, 1865-66, p 462.

CHAP XVI assume command.¹ Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander received him; and then and there, travel-stained, ununiformed, with a large bandana tied outside the waist of his sack-coat for a sash, and a stick for a sword, Colonel Grant undertook to get his regiment into line—a vain task. The new commander persevered in his efforts quietly, without bluster, without oaths, without for a moment losing his patience or his temper, but holding on to his work with that desperate and characteristic pertinacity which made him famous. Nevertheless, the first effort failed, and the Governor went home to deploie another blundering appointment.

A short time afterwards Frémont (then at St. Louis) made a preliminary order that Grant's regiment should be transferred to Quincy, preparatory to being sent against the bushwhackers in northern Missouri. Pursuant thereto the adjutant-general directed the railroad agent to provide the necessary transportation. The agent went in person to Camp Yates to arrange the matter with Colonel Grant. "How many passenger and how many freight cars do you want?" asked the agent. "I don't want any," responded Grant, bluffly and without explanation. The agent felt insulted, and reported as much to the adjutant-general. The indignant adjutant-general hurried to Camp Yates and, confronting Colonel Grant, asked why his orders were disobeyed. "How much time have I in which to get to Quincy?" asked Grant, unmoved. "I don't remember," replied the adju-

¹ Grant in the Report of the Adjutant-General of Illinois says he assumed command on June 16, but the "Tribune" Almanac shows that that day was Sunday. This statement that it occurred on Monday, June 17, is more likely correct.

tant-general. "My written orders," said Grant, CHAP XVI drawing them from his pocket, "give me ten days. What must I do when I get to Quincy?" "Go to northern Missouri, I suppose," replied the adjutant-general. "Is there a railroad there from Quincy?" asked Grant. "I believe not," said the adjutant-general. "Shall I wait there until one is built?" asked Grant. The adjutant-general looked puzzled, and began to think he was dealing with a lunatic. Thereupon Grant continued:

"As there is no railway to northern Missouri, and as I cannot wait to have one built, it is very clear that I shall have to march. Now, as it is generally understood that my regiment is in bad discipline, and as I have ten days' time, I have made up my mind that I will begin work in earnest, right at once, by marching my men from here to Quincy. That was the reason for my answer. I don't want any railroad cars, but I do want equipments for a march."

This style of practical soldiering of course created a sensation, both in camp and town. Grant adhered to his project, obtained his wagons, and personally superintended their being loaded with salt pork and regular army rations, and led the first regiment which ever left Springfield on foot, making some five miles the first day. That evening he issued an order that the regiment would march next morning at six. Six o'clock came, and many of the men were still asleep. It was seven before he got them off. The second evening he issued another order that on the following morning the regiment would march at six, ready or not ready. Morning and six o'clock came again, and the colonel

CHAP XVI formed his column, promptly and peremptorily, many of the laggards being forced into the ranks barefoot, not having time even to put on their shoes, and being forbidden to carry them. After a march of two or three miles the column was halted, and the shoes were sent for; and on the succeeding morning, the tap of the six o'clock drum found every man ready to fall in. Such is one of the local traditions. Grant's own report supplies the further information that the march, begun substantially at least, as above related, "was continued until about three miles beyond the Illinois River, where dispatches were received changing the destination of the regiment"; when after some delay and further changes of orders, resort was had to the railroad to meet an urgent call for reinforcements.

Report,
Adjutant-
General of
Illinois,
1865-66, p
462

The subsequent history of the War of the Rebellion will of itself force upon the reader the interesting parallel between the characters and careers of these two captains, who after retirement from service once more stepped to the front of campaign and battle. Their beginnings form a suggestive contrast: Grant, son of a tanner, growing up a barefoot country boy, familiar with log houses, roaming in field and forest, learning the craft of the axe-man and the horseman, and tasting only the simpler training of the village school; McClellan, son of an eminent physician, born in a great city, breathing at once the atmosphere of culture and science, and receiving in his teachings the stimulus and help of an excellent social position; their equal West Point life and Mexican war service being over, Grant, in his army experience limited to

the work of a regimental quartermaster; McClellan, called to high and special duties in exploration and scientific research, and to rare opportunities and distinguished companionship in foreign travel; Grant, coming to the civil war from a leather store, McClellan, from a railroad presidency; Grant, falling by mere accident into temporary routine clerical duties, McClellan, lifted by a committee of leading citizens into a major-generalship; Grant, promoted to the command of a mutinous regiment, McClellan, to the command of a department and an army; Grant, beginning work with a stick for a sword, laboring to get unwilling recruits into line, while McClellan was writing plans of campaign to the General-in-Chief; Grant, modestly rating his own abilities at a colonelcy, McClellan already dreaming of the mantle of the Lieutenant-General.

CHAP XVI

McClellan
to Gen
Scott, May
9, 1861 W R
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CHAPTER XVII

SCOTT'S ANACONDA

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PROCLAMATIONS could call men into camp, money place weapons in their hands, and commissions authorize officers to lead them to battle; but where should they march and when should they fight? For a time these questions furnished their own answer. The national capital must be defended, Baltimore opened to transit, and the Ohio line protected. The events of the first two weeks practically assured the achievement of these primary objects, and with the expansion of rebellion, and the change from insurrection to civil war, such questions once more rose with imperative demand for solution. The young and ambitious commander of the Department of the Ohio, was among the first to venture an opinion upon this complicated and far-reaching problem, doing so with more eagerness, perhaps, because he like every one else failed to comprehend the full proportions and significance of the coming struggle. On April 27, General McClellan wrote to the General-in-Chief:

1861.

The region north of the Ohio, and between the Mississippi and the Alleghanies, forms one grand strategic field, in which all operations must be under the control of one head, whether acting offensively or on the defen-

sive. I assume it as the final result that hostilities will break out on the line of the Ohio. For two reasons it is necessary to delay this result by all political means for a certain period of time. 1st, To enable the Northwest to make the requisite preparations, now very incomplete; 2d, That a strong diversion may be made in aid of the defense of Washington and the eastern line of operations.

CH XVII
McClellan
to Gen
Scott,
Apr 27, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
148

Premising then that a force of some ten or fifteen thousand men should be stationed in suitable detachments along the Ohio line as an army of observation, he submitted two plans of campaign intended to produce results at least partially decisive:

Could we be provided with arms, the Northwest has ample resources to furnish 80,000 men for active operations, after providing somewhat more than the troops mentioned above for the protection of the frontier. With the active army of operations it is proposed to cross the Ohio at or in the vicinity of Gallipolis and move up the valley of the Great Kanawha on Richmond. In combination with this Cumberland should be seized, and a few thousand men left at Ironton or Gallipolis to cover the rear and right flank of the main column. The presence of this detachment and a prompt movement on Louisville or the heights opposite Cincinnati would effectually prevent any interference on the part of Kentucky. The movement on Richmond should be conducted with the utmost promptness, and could not fail to relieve Washington as well as to secure the destruction of the Southern army if aided by a decided advance on the eastern line.

Another plan would be, in the event of Kentucky assuming a hostile position, to cross the Ohio at Cincinnati or Louisville with 80,000 men, march straight on Nashville, and thence act according to circumstances. Were a battle gained before reaching Nashville, so that the strength of Kentucky and Tennessee were effectually broken, a movement on Montgomery, aided by a vigorous movement on the eastern line towards Charleston and

CH XVII Augusta, should not be delayed The ulterior movements of the combined armies might be on Pensacola, Mobile, and New Orleans It seems clear that the forces of the Northwest should not remain quietly on the defensive, and that under present circumstances, if the supply of arms is such as to render it absolutely impossible to bring into the field the numbers indicated above, then offensive movements would be most effective on the line first indicated; but if so liberal a supply can be obtained as to enable us to dispose of 80,000 troops for the active army, then the second line of operations would be the most decisive.

McClellan
to Gen
Scott,
Apr 27, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, pp
148, 149

The astonishing crudeness of these "plans" is set in strong light by the few searching criticisms which General Scott indorsed upon the letter when he submitted it to the President:

As at the date of this letter General McClellan knew nothing of the intended call for two years' volunteers, he must have had the idea of composing his enormous columns of three months' men for operating against Nashville and Richmond—that is, of men whose term of service would expire by the time he had collected and organized them That such was his idea appears from a prior letter, in which, although the Ohio quota is but about 10,000 men, the general speaks, I think, of having 30,000 and wants arms, etc, for 80,000

2 A march upon Richmond from the Ohio would probably insure the revolt of Western Virginia, which if left alone will soon be five out of seven for the Union

3 The general eschews water transportation by the Ohio and Mississippi in favor of long, tedious, and break-down (of men, horses, and wagons) marches

4. His plan is to subdue the seceded States by piecemeal instead of enveloping them all (nearly) at once by a cordon of posts on the Mississippi to its mouth from its junction with the Ohio, and by blockading ships of war on the seaboard. For the cordon a number of men equal to one of the general's columns would probably suffice, and the transportation of men and all supplies by

water is about a fifth of the land cost, besides the immense saving in time.

General Scott did not stop at a mere revision of the suggestions which had been sent him. On the 3d of May, and again on the 21st of the same month, he wrote to McClellan outlining his own plans of campaign, so far as he had in the rapidly changing whirl of revolutionary events been able to reduce them to orderly examination and judgment, and asked his junior's advice in arranging details. The substance of them is here presented, not in their order of date, but in their logical connection:

It is the design of the Government to raise 25,000 additional regular troops, and 60,000 volunteers, for three years. It will be inexpedient either to rely on the three months' volunteers for extensive operations or to put in their hands the best class of arms we have in store. The term of service would expire by the commencement of a regular campaign, and the arms not lost be returned, mostly, in a damaged condition. Hence I must strongly urge upon you to confine yourself strictly to the quota of three months' men called for by the War Department.

We rely greatly on the sure operation of a complete blockade of the Atlantic and Gulf ports soon to commence. In connection with such blockade we propose a powerful movement down the Mississippi to the ocean, with a cordon of posts at proper points, and the capture of Forts Jackson and St. Philip; the object being to clear out and keep open this great line of communication in connection with the strict blockade of the seaboard, so as to envelop the insurgent States and bring them to terms with less bloodshed than by any other plan. I suppose there will be needed from twelve to twenty steam gun-boats, and a sufficient number of steam transports (say forty) to carry all the *personnel* (say 60,000 men) and *materiel* of the expedition, most of the gun boats to be in advance to open the way, and the remainder to follow

CH XVII
Gen Scott,
Indorse-
ment, May
2, 1861. W R
Series III,
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CH XVII

Gen. Scott
to McClellan,
May 3, 1861
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177, 178

and protect the rear of the expedition, etc This army, in which it is not improbable you may be invited to take an important part, should be composed of our best regulars for the advance, and of three years' volunteers, all well officered, and with four and a half months of instruction in camps prior to (say) November 10 In the progress down the river all the enemy's batteries on its banks we of course would turn and capture, leaving a sufficient number of posts with complete garrisons to keep the river open behind the expedition Finally, it will be necessary that New Orleans should be strongly occupied and securely held until present difficulties are composed

I propose to organize an army of regulars and volunteers on the Ohio River, of say 80,000 men, to be divided into two unequal columns, the smaller to proceed by water on the first autumnal swell in the rivers, headed and flanked by gun-boats (propellers of great speed and strength), and the other column to proceed as nearly abreast as practicable by land—of course without the benefit of rail transportation—and receiving at certain points on the river its heavier articles of consumption from the freight boats of the first column By this means the wagon train of the land column may no doubt be much diminished, but would still remain, I fear, so large as to constitute a great impediment to the movement Would 80,000 men be sufficient to conquer its way to New Orleans and clear out the Mississippi to the Gulf? What should be the relative numbers of the two columns, and at how many points besides Louisville, Paducah, Columbus, Hickman, Memphis, Vicksburg, and New Orleans would the two columns be able to hold a close communication with each other? Of course much would depend upon the relations to the United States of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri I ask your views not only on the foregoing points, but also as to the form, draught, tonnage, and armament of the gun-boats or tugs Cincinnati abounds in the best information on all these heads

Ibid,
May 21, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
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A word now as to the greatest obstacle in the way of this plan—the great danger now pressing upon us—the impatience of our patriotic and loyal Union friends.

They will urge instant and vigorous action, regardless, I fear, of consequences—that is, unwilling to wait for the slow instruction of (say) twelve or fifteen camps, for the rise of rivers, and the return of frosts to kill the virus of malignant fevers below Memphis. I fear this, but impress right views, on every proper occasion, upon the brave men who are hastening to the support of their Government. Lose no time, while necessary preparations for the great expedition are in progress, in organizing, drilling, and disciplining your three months' men, many of whom, it is hoped, will be ultimately found enrolled under the call for three years' volunteers. Should an urgent and immediate occasion arise meantime for their services, they will be the more effective. I commend these views to your consideration and shall be happy to hear the result.

CH XVII

Gen Scott
to McClel-
lan, May 3,
1861. W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
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It may be urged that, considering their disparity of years and experience, this plan of Scott is as crude as was that of McClellan. Such a view is hardly just. The leading suggestions of the General-in-Chief, the deliberate instruction of armies, the choice of a healthy season for active operations, the perfection of the seaboard blockade, and the opening of the Mississippi as the first grand step in the reduction of the revolted States to obedience, were conceptions worthy the fame and achievements of the conqueror of Mexico, and in substance proved prophetic and decisive. The true criticism to be passed upon the plan as a whole is that it was premature and therefore necessarily incomplete. The rebel capital was still in Montgomery; the Confederate military league was not finally cemented, and not till a month afterwards was Jefferson Davis able to announce with confidence his determination to arm a hundred thousand men. The proper scale upon which to apply military judgment was not developed. There are suf-

CH XVII ficient reasons why this first outline, or military programme, so soon fell into abeyance and was never formally revived. It remained in the shape of a purpose, rather than a defined project; nevertheless, as a purpose it had so important and permanent a place in the mind of the General-in-Chief that it gave form and direction to the action of the Government.

General Scott was not mistaken in his prediction that the impatience of public opinion at the North would prove one of the most troublesome impediments to methodical war. Even while he was writing his prophetic words a conference of several of the Northwestern governors was in session at Cleveland, Ohio, discussing the state of the country and demanding action—prompt, irresistible, overwhelming. Imbued with the ardor of politicians, and confident in that almost unparalleled business energy of the people, in which their locality has shown such preeminence, they assumed too hastily that methods of peace might be applied to operations of war. The two processes are radically dissimilar. The achievements of peace—exploration, settlement, tilling fields, and building cities—find their appropriate symbol in the bee-hive—diffused labor, continuous activity, cumulative construction; while the courses of war are the movements of the serpent—concentrated force, intermitted action, concealed approach, the preparatory coil, and the spring of lightning-like rapidity—every agency working to waste and destruction. In a memorial addressed to the President the governors urged an immediate call for 300,000 men and the necessity for preparation and drill.



MAP OF THE BULL RUN CAMPAIGN.

We see a necessity now, not only for the safety of the Government, but for the safety of the free border States, for immediate action. There is no occasion for the Government to delay, because the States themselves are willing to act vigorously and efficiently. I must be permitted to say it, because it is a fact, there is a spirit evoked by this rebellion among the liberty-loving people of the country that is driving them to action, and if the Government will not permit them to act for it, they will act for themselves. It is better for the Government to direct this current than to let it run wild. So far as possible we have attempted to allay this excess of spirit, but there is a moral element and a reasoning element in this uprising that cannot be met in the ordinary way. There is a conviction of great wrongs to be redressed, and that the Government is to be preserved by them. The Government must provide an outlet for this feeling or it will find one for itself. If the Government does not at once shoulder this difficulty and direct its current there will come something more than a war to put down rebellion—it will be a war between border States, which will lose sight, for the time, of the Government

CH XVII

Randall to
Lincoln,
May 6, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
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The few weeks following only intensified this general desire and impatience. On May 24 the Governors of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, united in a letter, asking, in substance, that the campaign should be immediately entered upon, by the armed occupation of Kentucky and its leading communications with the South, and that increased forces and extended authority should be given McClellan for this purpose. By his indorsement submitted to the Secretary of War, on May 29, General Scott pointed out that permission had already been given to McClellan to aid Union sentiment in Kentucky, even to the extent of occupying some of their towns; but that as yet "many of the wisest and best Union men in Kentucky have strongly intimated that thrusting

1861

Dennison,
Yates, and
Morton,
Memorial,
May 24, 1861
W R
Series III,
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CH XVII protection upon their people is likely to do far more harm than good, and probably the danger can be better estimated at home, than by friends abroad." To a present southward campaign, the General-in-Chief was decidedly opposed.

In discussing the memorial before Governor Yates and several United States Senators it was urged by some of the latter, and I think concurred in by his Excellency, that Memphis ought to be immediately occupied. This would certainly be to begin a campaign without preparation. Let us suppose Memphis to be threatened. Before the expedition could reach the point of attack—say with 10,000 men—the enemy would certainly interpose at least the double of that number, and if we commence with 20,000 the same thing would occur, when the cries for reenforcements, being constantly repeated, would probably sweep Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, etc., of their respective quotas of volunteers, and leave us nobody from those States for pushing the war to a close at the right season; for the troops about Memphis would not only have lost the opportunity of acquiring tactical instruction during the summer and autumn, but would be so enfeebled by fevers as to be scarcely able to do duty before late in the winter.

Gen. Scott
to Cam-
eron, May
29, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
281

Since war is not an exact science, it is idle to speculate upon what might have been the eventualities of a close observance and execution of General Scott's plans. It happened that the veteran's advanced age and ill-health rendered it necessary that some one besides himself should be intrusted with the execution of his ideas and purposes as a whole, as well as in their multifarious details. We can therefore hardly imagine it to have been possible to put his views to a practical test. Judged merely as a preliminary outline and theory, they seem to have been eminently wise; and there is

little doubt that if some young and energetic commander could have looked at the immense problem in his spirit, and in the light of his experience, and could have brought his high professional skill to their performance, the war on the side of the Union would have been more systematic, more effective, and of shorter duration. CH. XVII

But in the heat of patriotic ardor and popular craving for action which prevailed at that time, days seemed months and weeks seemed years; and public impatience could not endure the thought of allowing the whole summer to pass by in seeming idleness and waste, before sending the great armies of the Union on what they fondly hoped would be a short march and an easy victory. The suggestions of the General-in-Chief for enveloping the seceded States by a cordon of posts down the Mississippi, and a combined coast blockade, received merciless criticism and blind condemnation in the newspapers of the country, and his grand outline of strategy was caricatured as "Scott's Anaconda."

CHAPTER XVIII

THE ADVANCE

CH XVIII

WHILE thus laying out his large and methodical plan to use the new three years' armies for a decisive fall and winter campaign under perfect organization, thorough discipline, and aided by an effective gun-boat corps, General Scott did not intend that the 75,000 three months' militia should spend their brief enlistment in idleness. "My meaning is," he wrote May 17, "that we should first make ourselves, particularly the Government, safe in this capital; then send the next seven or eight regiments to occupy and intrench themselves on Arlington Heights; then the next surplus force in an expedition against Harper's Ferry, etc. In the mean time nine or ten regiments, over and above the garrison at Fort Monroe, will have arrived there for aggressive purposes. Who shall command that fort and direct the operations alluded to?"

Gen Scott
to Cam-
eron, May
17, 1861
W R
Series III.
Vol I, p
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Upon consultation it was decided to transfer General Butler to the latter post, with a major-general's commission; and, to furnish active duty for such of his forces as were not needed for garrison service, he was authorized to capture any hostile batteries within half-a-day's march of the fort, and, if

it were practicable, to menace and recapture the Gosport navy yard. At first the general protested against his removal from Baltimore, as conveying the implication of censure, but, on reflection, he yielded the point, and his high administrative abilities soon demonstrated their usefulness in his new field, though one of his early military expeditions met a discouraging defeat. He was succeeded at Baltimore by Nathaniel P. Banks of Massachusetts, who was appointed by the President from civil life to the grade of major-general of volunteers, as was General Butler, and as were also John A. Dix of New York and many others whose names thereafter became prominent. CH XVIII.

Attention has been repeatedly drawn to that strangely perverted political sentiment which sought to make State supremacy a shield for rebellion—which inspired the “non-coercion” theory of Buchanan’s message, the “neutrality” doctrine of the Kentucky Legislature, the protest of the Governor of Maryland against the landing of United States troops at Annapolis, and in deference to which Lincoln had repeatedly announced that he had no desire to “invade” Virginia or any other State. But with this announcement he always coupled the declaration that he held himself at liberty to take measures to repel any further aggressions upon the national authority.

The lapse of a single month had wrought a profound change in the public opinion of the North. Secession sophistry about oppression and subjugation was sufficiently answered by the practical logic of the Southern States in collecting armies and uniting in military leagues. Military neces-

CH XVIII sity, not political expediency, was now the unavoidable rule of action. The Washington authorities had long foreseen that merely filling the national capital with Northern regiments would not by itself give security to the Government buildings and archives. The Presidential Mansion, the Capitol, and the various Department offices all lay within easy reach of possible rebel batteries which might rise in a single night at eligible points on the southern bank of the Potomac, and from which hostile shot and shell could speedily reduce the city to ruins. As early, therefore, as the 3d of May, General Scott instructed Colonel J. K. F. Mansfield, the local commander, to seize and fortify Arlington Heights. Various causes produced a postponement of the design, urgent as was the necessity; but finally the needed reinforcements arrived.

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The various rumors which had reached Washington of a hostile advance to capture or menace the city proved unfounded. Nevertheless the military organization of Virginia was proceeding with all haste towards a state of efficiency. The Virginia Convention had authorized a provisional army; Governor Letcher had called out the volunteer forces; Lee held the chief command under State and Confederate authority, and while restricting himself to a policy of defense and preparation, ordered a strict observance of the frontier, and disposed his camps of instruction so as to dispute as soon as possible any considerable advance beyond the line of the Potomac. Measures had been taken to establish batteries on the lower part of this river with a view to its eventual blockade, and Thomas J. Jackson had gathered a force of eight thousand men,

nearly all armed and ready for service, at Harper's Ferry, several heavy guns had been forwarded to Alexandria, and a small rebel detachment occupied the town, over which a rebel flag was flying in plain view from the windows of the Executive Mansion in Washington. Peaceful relations with Virginia were no longer possible; a state of war, more or less active, was only a question of time.

Under plans carefully matured, the Union forces made their advance across the Potomac River, and entered upon the "sacred soil" of Virginia, on the morning of May 24. If this phrase had become a contemptuous by-word, the conspirators who ruled the Old Dominion were alone to blame. Against the pronounced popular Union vote of the preceding February, and against the repeated Union declarations of the Virginia Convention, they had carried that body to a hasty secession ordinance, delivered the State to Jefferson Davis in the fetters of a military league, and inaugurated war against the United States. Had any further technical justification been needed by the Federal Government it was furnished by the presence of regiments from the several "foreign" rebel States in the Virginia camps, and in the further act of a pretended popular vote of the previous day, May 23, under virtual military duress, to ratify the secession ordinance. Lincoln, in his message to the special session of Congress, made a terse statement of the case: "The people of Virginia have thus allowed this giant insurrection to make its nest within her borders; and this Government has no choice left but to deal with it where it finds it."

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In the bright moonlight at two o'clock of the morning of May 24, the march was begun; three regiments crossing the Aqueduct Bridge at Georgetown, and four regiments the Long Bridge at Washington. Squads of cavalry, dashing across in advance, took quick possession of the Virginia end of each of these bridges, as also of the Chain Bridge four miles above Georgetown, and forestalled any attempt by the enemy to destroy them. The movement proved a complete surprise, and found no opposing force. Once across, the outposts were pushed several miles beyond the river; by sunrise of the 24th, the engineers had traced their lines and the volunteers were busy with pick and spade throwing up fortifications. Here was begun that formidable system of earthworks, crowning every hill in an irregular line of perhaps ten miles, extending from the river-bend above Georgetown to the bay into which Hunting Creek flows below Alexandria, which constituted such an immense military strength, and so important a moral support to the Army of the Potomac and indeed to the Union sentiment of the whole country during the entire war.

The capture of Alexandria and its garrison formed part of the projected work. It had been agreed that the First Michigan regiment should march directly from the Long Bridge to the rear of that city, while steamers should convey the Eleventh New York regiment, commanded by Colonel E. E. Ellsworth, from their camp on Giesboro' Point and land them on the Alexandria wharves, under cover of the guns of the war steamer *Pawnee*, anchored in the river. The march, the

embarkation, and the landing were successfully executed, but the expected capture of the rebel garrison was frustrated. The rebel commander had already been notified by his pickets of the crossing at the Chain Bridge, and suspecting a general movement, had his five hundred infantry under arms. He hurried his detachment out of the back streets to a waiting train of cars just as the Michigan volunteers were entering the city; and though the rebel rear-guard and the Union advance-guard were not more than two hundred yards apart, the detachment made its escape. A small troop of rebel cavalry, still lingering under orders to watch further movements, was easily captured. A few harmless shots had been exchanged between the landing troops and the retiring rebel sentries, and the whole movement seemed on the point of completion without bloodshed when a tragedy occurred which startled the country. This was the assassination of Colonel Ellsworth.

He had led his regiment into the place, and personally superintended posting it to secure order and prevent surprise. This task finished in the gray of the morning, his eye caught the rebel flag hoisted over the principal hotel, which had so long flaunted defiance at the national capital. In the ardor of youthful patriotism he was seized with the wish to take it down with his own hands. Entering with only three companions, he mounted to the roof, cut the halyards, and started down the narrow winding stairs with a soldier preceding and another following him. As Ellsworth was about to pass a doorway, the hotel-keeper sprang from concealment and discharged the contents of

CH XVIII a double-barreled shot-gun full in the colonel's heart. Retribution was instantaneous. As Ellsworth fell forward, his foremost companion, private Francis E. Brownell, dealt out immediate death to the assassin with both rifle shot and bayonet thrust.

To the people of the North, already strung to high nervous tension, this drama stood out in vivid relief from the swift-moving incidents of rebellion. Ellsworth was not only the first sacrifice of the war; his youth, his knight-errant qualities of character, his high ambition, and his talent for leadership had made him extremely popular. Upon President Lincoln his untimely death fell with the force of a personal bereavement. He had brought Ellsworth to Washington among his suite of friends; had seen his magnetic power to control the crowds that thronged every footstep of the President-elect; the echoes of his cheery and manly voice seemed yet to linger in the corridors and rooms of the Executive Mansion, from which he had so recently looked upon this identical flag of treason now stained with his blood. When the colonel's comrades returned with the body, Lincoln ordered that it should lie in state in the East Room, where Cabinet, diplomats, and military and naval dignitaries attended the impressive funeral ceremonies.

Arlington Heights and Alexandria being successfully occupied, General Scott turned his attention to the campaign against Harper's Ferry. The State of Pennsylvania furnished sixteen regiments of militia under the three months' call; and to one of the two major-generalships to which

this contingent entitled her, Governor Curtin appointed General Robert Patterson. A lieutenant and captain in the war of 1812, and a major-general in the war with Mexico, he seemed well fitted by his training and experience to take a leading part in the new events. General Scott regarded him as "an excellent second in command," and at once placed him in charge of the military "Department of Pennsylvania," formed of the States of Pennsylvania, Delaware, and part of Maryland. He was sixty-nine years old, but the enthusiasm of the hour seemed to lift the weight of years, and to restore the vigor and activity of his prime. The first pressing duty assigned to him, that of preparing a column to cooperate in restoring the freedom of the Baltimore route to the Union troops, was soon rendered unnecessary by Butler's advance into that city, and the strong political reaction throughout Maryland. On the day Ellsworth fell, Scott telegraphed Patterson to "threaten Harper's Ferry and support the Union sentiment in Western Virginia."

Gen Scott
to Patterson, May
24, 1861
W. R. Vol
II, p. 652

Concentrating his forces about Chambersburg, Patterson on June 1st reported his design to push the enemy from Harper's Ferry back upon Winchester. General Scott commended the plan he transmitted, but cautioned him to insure success by all possible foresight, and also informed him of the measures devised at Washington to aid the movement. A secondary column, under Colonel Charles P. Stone, was ordered towards him to cooperate, if found expedient; and a movement was projected beyond Alexandria to create a diversion. Meanwhile a battalion, and a battery of

CH XVIII regulars, and the Rhode Island regiment with its battery, all of which Scott described as "the best reenforcements within my reach," were sent directly to him. The magnitude of his task grew upon Patterson as he approached his field of action, and on June 10 he wrote to the Secretary of War:

Remember, I beseech you, that Harper's Ferry is (as I have said from the first) the place where the first great battle will be fought, and the result will be decisive of the future. The insurgents are strongly intrenched, have an immense number of guns, and will contest every inch of ground. The importance of victory at Harper's Ferry cannot be estimated. I cannot sleep for thinking about it. Remember, my dear General, that my reputation, and the reputation of our dear old State, is at stake in this issue. I beseech you, therefore, by our ancient friendship, give me the means of success. You have the means; place them at my disposal, and shoot me if I do not use them to advantage.

Patterson
to Cam-
eron, June
10, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 672

What he considered "the means" sufficient to secure a victory can only be left to conjecture. The enemy had at that date "almost seven thousand men of all arms" at Harper's Ferry; Patterson something over seventeen regiments. Moving at length he reached the Potomac at Williamsport about the 15th of June, to find that the enemy had hastily destroyed the railroad bridge at Harper's Ferry, abandoned their heavy guns, and retreated upon Winchester. "The destruction of Harper's Ferry is a decoy, I fear," he wrote; but on the following day, when more fully assured by the actual crossing of a part of his army, he took courage sufficient to report a victory, announcing that "they have fled and in confusion; their retreat is

J E Johnston, "Narrative of Military Operations," p 22

Patterson
to McClellan, June
15, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 689

as demoralizing as a defeat" Nevertheless, when General Scott asked him by telegraph what pursuit he intended to make, he replied emphatically, "Design no pursuit; cannot make it"; and simply proposed to hold and fortify Harper's Ferry, open the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to the West, and encourage Union sentiment by sending detachments to the neighboring towns. To this General Scott replied, strongly condemning detachments, directing him to keep within his present limits, and ordering the special reinforcements which he had sent him back to Washington.

Through the long inexperience of the nation in war, even the most ordinary military questions were, at the beginning of the rebellion, embarrassing and difficult; and certainly the complicated problem of the military value of Harper's Ferry was perplexing in the extreme. Simple reasons, however, had directed military movements to this point. The first handful of Virginia militia took possession of the Government armory and its machinery, so priceless to the rebels. Then Jefferson Davis hurried his regiments upon it to aid in the capture of Baltimore. Since the failure of that scheme, it served as a convenient camp to break a great railroad and to gather and discipline an army. The presence of this army, in its turn, naturally attracted Patterson's movement to disperse or capture it.

The Confederate President had become so much impressed with the importance of the post that he sent General Joseph E. Johnston, whom he at that time valued as his best officer, to command and hold it; both Davis and Lee informing him "that they

CH XVIII
Patterson
to Towns-
end, June
16, 1861
W R Vol
II, pp 692,
693
Ibid, p 691

Gen Scott
to Patter-
son, June
16, 1861
W R Vol
II, pp 694,
695

CH XVIII regarded Harper's Ferry as a natural fortress, commanding the entrance into the valley of Virginia from Pennsylvania and Maryland, and that it was occupied in that idea." But when Johnston arrived and inspected the position he saw the error of the assumption, and immediately reported that it could easily be turned either above or below, and that he must have an army to hold it, and though Lee wrote him that its loss would be "depressing to the cause of the South," and "bring in its train political consequences which it is well believed you cannot contemplate without the most painful emotions," when he found Patterson approaching with an army about double his own he hastily evacuated the place, as stated. But finding that he was not followed, he turned and presented a bold front. As soon as Patterson's advance retired north of the Potomac, Johnston pushed his pickets up to the south bank, and by the usual arts of a skillful commander managed to impress his antagonist with the firm belief that he had sufficient strength to dispute the passage, or even to cross and attack.

Lee to
Johnston,
June 3, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 901,
and Cooper
to John-
ston, June
13, 1861
Ibid, p 924

During the progress of these main preparations and movements, scattering hostilities were breaking out at different points in Virginia. Several rebel earth-works fronting on the waters about Fort Monroe were shelled; a threatening battery which was rising to obstruct the navigation of the Potomac near Aquia Creek was attacked by a more deliberate bombardment, but without any very decided effect; while a smart skirmish between cavalry at Fairfax Court House, resulting in dead and wounded, gave the appearance of actual war. Two additional incidents of this character rise

into historical importance more by their effect CH. XVIII. than their magnitude.

A detachment of six hundred Ohio troops was sent from Alexandria towards Vienna station to repair and guard the railroad. As the ground had been occupied by another Union regiment the day before, no unusual precaution seemed necessary. A passing reconnoitering party of the enemy of equal strength was, however, making a temporary halt at that very place; and now, at about 6 P. M., hearing the whistle of an approaching locomotive, they planted two light field-guns on a hill commanding a bend of the railroad, and as the cars moved into the long, deep cut they opened on them with grape and shell. The engine became disabled and could not draw the train back. Five killed, six wounded, and ten missing was the limit of the casualties; the men swarmed out of the cars, clambered up the steep banks, and sought refuge in the woods on both sides of the track.

June 17,
1861

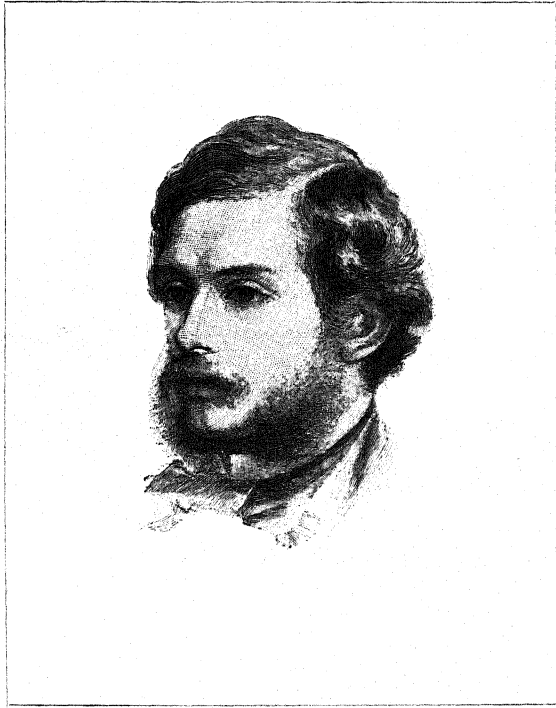
The other, a little earlier in date, was more serious. Three regiments and a battalion were sent from the Union camps near Fort Monroe on a night march to surprise and capture a rebel battery at Big Bethel, eight miles distant. Plan and preparation were judicious, but the practical execution proved blundering and disastrous. Two of the regiments marched by different roads to effect a junction at a given point; the one which arrived first mistook their approaching comrades for the enemy, and friends fired upon friends. This, however, was only the beginning of the calamity. Still proceeding, they came to the battery about nine o'clock in the morning. They had an overwhelming

June 9, 1861.

June 10.

CH XVIII. force and the ground was by no means difficult. But the attack was made with hesitation and confusion; and after an hour's vague and purposeless manoeuvring and halting under fire, they felt obliged to retire with a loss of eighteen killed and fifty-three wounded. Among the killed was Major Theodore Winthrop, a young writer of brilliant promise.

War necessarily brings disaster, death, and devastation; all this was a relatively unimportant prelude and loss. But it had an unusually exasperating effect upon the heart of the North, which was longing to hear of retribution for repeated insult to authority, punishment for the treasonable assaults upon the national flag. Instead of this there came what seemed a ceaseless succession of mortifying reports—the Baltimore massacre, the assassination of Ellsworth, the slaughter at Big Bethel, the ambuscade at Vienna. In reality it was the humiliation and shame of continued defeat which touched the quick, rather than the extent of the sacrifice. Overstrained enthusiasm was slowly changing into morbid sensitiveness and a bitterness of impatience which seemed almost beyond endurance. Besides this there was an underlying motive, much deeper in basis, and stronger in force. The crisis and the war had grown out of the slavery quarrel; and Unionists of positive and radical temper were under firm conviction that the South had pushed this quarrel to its extreme issues, because of the temporizing, yielding spirit so frequently shown by the North. Despite all the signs of an irremediable rupture, there lurked in their hearts the painful apprehension that some turn or trick of political legerdemain would even now compromise



MAJOR THEODORE WINTHROP.

away the victory won at the ballot-box, and once CH XVIII more buy a hollow and treacherous peace at the cost of some fatal legal or constitutional concession to slavery. Since the South had appealed to the sword, they felt that the sword alone should judge and punish her.

Prompted by all these different shades of feeling there now arose throughout the North a demand for military action and military success. Assuming the undeniable preponderance of men and means in the free States, public opinion also illogically assumed that they could be made immediately decisive. Under bold head-lines a leading newspaper kept "The nation's war cry," standing in its columns. "Forward to Richmond! Forward to Richmond! The rebel Congress must not be allowed to meet there on the 20th of July. By that date the place must be held by the national army!" Though this was but a single voice, it brought responsive echoes from all parts of the North. In truth the Administration at Washington needed no urging. Official circles shared fully the eagerness of the country. The President and his advisers comprehended the necessity of meeting the just expectations of the free States, of sustaining the popular enthusiasm which had filled the three months' quota of volunteers, and to which they looked for a like completion of the projected three years' army. Financial arrangements were the most precarious makeshifts. The Government was literally living from hand to mouth. Congress was soon to meet in extraordinary session, and of that body the Administration would be compelled to ask men, money, confidence, and authority, to

New York
Tribune,
June 26,
1861

CH XVIII an extent which by comparison seemed almost without limit

Two months of the first three months' enlistment of the militia called into service were already gone; it was desirable that the remaining third of their term should be utilized in an energetic movement. General Scott's original idea had been that this energetic movement should occur at Harper's Ferry, but Johnston's evacuation of that place and Patterson's over-caution and defensive strategy frustrated the design. Under the increasing political pressure, the most promising alternative was thought to be a direct advance from Washington against Manassas Junction, the strategical importance of which the Confederates had instinctively recognized, especially its relation to Harper's Ferry. "These two columns," wrote Colonel Philip St. Geo. Cocke to Lee (May 15), "one at Manassas and one at Winchester, could readily cooperate and concentrate upon the one point or the other, either to make head against the enemy's columns advancing down the valley, should he force Harper's Ferry, or, in case we repulse him at Harper's Ferry, the Winchester supporting column could throw itself on this side of the mountains to cooperate with the column at Manassas." This advantage was becoming every day more apparent, and on May 31 the Richmond authorities sent General G. T. Beauregard, whose Sumter laurels had made him a popular Southern hero, to command the post and gather an army.

Cocke to
Lee, May
15, 1861
W. R. Vol
II, p 847

1861

On the 29th of June, President Lincoln called his Cabinet and principal military officers to a council

of war at the Executive Mansion to discuss a campaign against the rebels at Manassas. General Scott took occasion to say that he was not in favor of such a movement. "He did not believe in a little war by piecemeal. But he believed in a war of large bodies." He adhered to the "Anaconda" policy, and a decisive campaign down the Mississippi River in the autumn and winter. "We were to go down, fight all the battles that were necessary, take all the positions we could find, and garrison them, fight a battle at New Orleans and win it, and thus end the war." But, being overruled by the President and Cabinet in favor of an immediate movement, the old soldier gracefully yielded his preference, and gave his best counsel and cooperation to the new enterprise. He caused to be read the plan matured by General Irvin McDowell and approved by himself. McDowell was forty-two years old and an accomplished West Point graduate. He had won a captaincy at Buena Vista in the Mexican war, and since had performed staff duty as assistant adjutant-general in various departments. But promotion being slow in times of peace, he had only attained the grade of major at the outbreak of the civil war. An act of modest self-denial, perhaps not repeated by any officer during the rebellion, marks his conscientious professional honor. When he was selected to command the several columns which crossed the Potomac to occupy Arlington Heights and Alexandria, the President offered him a major-general's commission, but McDowell declined so high a promotion. It would be unjust to his brother officers, he said; it might excite a jealousy

CH XVIII
McDowell,
Testimony,
Report of
the Com-
mittee on
the Con-
duct of the
War

CH XVIII embarrassing to his own usefulness; he preferred to earn the distinction before wearing it. His scruples were respected, and he was appointed a brigadier-general only.

J G N,
Personal
Memoran-
da MS

McDowell's plan stated that the secession forces then at Manassas Junction and its dependencies were estimated at 25,000. When threatened they would call up all reinforcements within reach.

If General J E Johnston's force is kept engaged by Major-General Patterson, and Major-General Butler occupies the force now in his vicinity, I think they will not be able to bring up more than ten thousand men. So we must calculate on having to do with about 35,000 men . . . Leaving small garrisons in the defensive works, I propose to move against Manassas with a force of thirty thousand of all arms, organized into three columns, with a reserve of ten thousand . . . After uniting the columns this side of it, I propose to attack the main position, by turning it, if possible, so as to cut off communications by rail with the South

McDowell
to Towns-
end, June
—, 1861
W R Vol.
II, pp 720,
721

To prevent the union of Beauregard and Johnston was not only the central purpose but the essential condition of this plan, and was thoroughly discussed by the assembled council. "I could not undertake to meet all their forces together," said McDowell. "General Scott assured me—I use his own words—'if Johnston joins Beauregard he shall have Patterson on his heels.'" With this clear understanding it was decided and ordered that McDowell should enter on his preparations, and that the movement should begin on the 9th of July.¹

McDowell,
Testimony,
Report of
the Com-
mittee on
the Con-
duct of the
War

¹ Despite all captious criticism no reasonable fault can be pointed out, either in McDowell's plan to capture Beauregard at Manassas by a swift march and sharp attack, in Scott's strategy to beat the two rebel armies separately instead of united, or in the policy

When General Scott made his promise to McDowell, there existed no reason why it might not be fulfilled to the letter. Patterson had intimated in unmistakable terms that he could clear the Shenandoah Valley of the enemy in ten days, upon which Scott wrote him: "I deem it best that you should with your column remain in his front, and if, as is supposed, with superior or equal numbers, that you should cross the river and offer him battle." In reply, while urgently requesting reenforcements, and especially additional field batteries, Patterson nevertheless again reported that he was making arrangements to cross, and that it was necessary to act before the three months' enlistments expired. "Officers and men," said he, "are anxious to be led against the insurgents, and if the General-in-Chief will give me a regiment of regulars, and an adequate force of field artillery, I will cross the river and attack the enemy, unless their forces are ascertained to be more than two to one." The regiment of regulars was out of the question; but additional batteries and large reenforcements were ordered to join him. When the preparation for the Manassas movement was fairly under way, both McDowell and Scott became doubly solicitous that Patterson's coöperation should not fail through accident or neglect, and a plan was devised to place the matter beyond doubt. General Scott could see that Patterson did not get

of the Government, which aimed at the critical moment Patterson at a political advantage through an early victory, and furnished ample means to secure it. Fine-spun military theories about "exterior lines" fall to the ground before the practical fact that at

CH XVIII

Patterson
to Towns-
end, June
23, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 717

Gen Scott
to Patter-
son, June
25, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 725

Patterson
to Towns-
end, June
28, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 730
Towns-
end to Patter-
son, June
30, 1861.
W R Vol
II, p 734.

had nearly or quite double num-
bers against Johnston, and had he
used them to hold or defeat him,
McDowell with 28,000 should
have routed Beauregard with
23,000

CH XVIII forward within "striking distance." The question of removing him from command was discussed by the Cabinet and officers at Washington; but as such a step might bring great hazard, it was decided to send General C. W. Sandford to him with enough further reenforcements to enable him to fight, and who, waiving his superior rank, would consent to take service under Patterson and prompt him to certain and effective action. This combination was decided upon and ordered on July 6, and in two or three days General Sandford with four regiments, and the independent column under Stone with three regiments and a half, reached Patterson, who had in the mean while once more crossed the Potomac to Martinsburg, driving the enemy's outposts before him after a sharp skirmish at Falling Waters. At Martinsburg, Patterson halted and asked permission to change his camp to Charlestown, as being a more convenient base of supplies, and a better point from which to move and strike. But his dispatches show that he understood perfectly the object of his campaign. "General Sandford informs me by letter that he has for me a letter from you. I hope it will inform me when you will put your column in motion against Manassas, and when you wish me to strike. . . When you make your attack, I expect to advance and offer battle." Leaving Patterson thus confronting Johnston in the Shenandoah Valley, we must for a moment turn our attention to the intermediate events which attended McClellan's advance from the Ohio River into Western Virginia, and record the first important victory for the Union army.

1861.

Patterson
to Towns-
end, July
9, 1861.
W R Vol
II, p 163

CHAPTER XIX

WEST VIRGINIA

WE have seen how in Maryland, Kentucky, and CHAP XIX.
Missouri the secession conspiracy was foiled by the resolute voice and energy of their loyal Union majorities. A like result in even a more marked degree occurred in the western part of the State of Virginia, and served to effect its permanent political division into two States. The broad area of Virginia, which before 1861 extended from Chesapeake Bay to the Ohio River, was bisected by the great natural barrier of the Alleghany mountains, a fact which exerted a direct influence upon the period and character of her original exploration and settlement. Her seaboard and the adjacent plains and plateaux sloping up to the crests of the great mountain-chain, comprising the fairest and most fertile portion of her lands, naturally gathered the first and principal harvest of immigration and wealth. Here the profitable tobacco culture found its productive fields, whilst coastwise and foreign commerce made its home in her numerous bays and rivers. Eastern Virginia was already the great parent colony of the South, when the western portions of the State were only a vaguely known wilderness. Even the first streams of Western

CHAP XIX emigration passed over or around it, to Kentucky on the south, or to Ohio on the north of "the beautiful river." The reason is plain: Western Virginia was a succession of mountain ridges, and a medley of hills, and the adventurous pioneer pushed on towards the more inviting levels of forest or prairie which lay beyond. Nevertheless, being a diversified, picturesque, healthful region, a country of pure air, clear springs, magnificent forests, lovely valleys, it gradually gathered a population of hunters and explorers, of lumbermen and miners, of herdsman and small farmers, pursuing a local and miscellaneous rather than a staple agriculture; and began to lay the foundation for a great future manufacturing industry, of which the basis was found in the immense resources of its forests and mines.

The tidewater region of Virginia not only accumulated preponderant population and wealth, but also, as a direct consequence, absorbed and exercised controlling political power. Here the structure of society had been reared on the English model, with great estates, manor-houses, aristocratic habits and pride of family. Here traditions yet lingered fondly about the colonial and revolutionary periods as the days of greatest prosperity and influence. The local magnates, who made Richmond their Mecca, laid and expended taxes as though the Blue Ridge were the true western boundary of the "Old Dominion," and the great mountain region beyond only a tributary province. It is possible that necessity as well as pride may to some extent have prompted this absorption; many of the once fertile tobacco fields of Eastern Virginia were exhausted

and abandoned long before the valuable grass and pasture lands of Western Virginia were cleared of their heavy forests. Western Virginia could do nothing but complain. With a double population to do the voting, all the large appropriations and favors of the State government steadily flowed to Eastern Virginia. CHAP. XIX.

The greatest contrast was visible in the institution of slavery. Eastern Virginia had a population of 472,494 slaves; Western Virginia only 18,371 slaves. Since slave population was everywhere the measure of disunion feeling, there was comparatively little disloyalty in Western Virginia. Scattering individuals here and there were poisoned by the desire of secession; but the bulk of the people remained unshaken in their attachment to the Union.

When, therefore, the Richmond Convention, by the secret secession ordinance on the 17th of April, and a few days later by a military league with Jefferson Davis, transferred Virginia to the rebel Government at Montgomery, the Western half of the State rose against the rude violation of self-government with an almost unanimous protest and resolved to secede from secession. A series of popular meetings was held, with such success that on the 13th of May delegates from twenty-five counties met for consultation at Wheeling, and agreed on such further action and coöperation as would enable them to escape the treason and alienation to which they had been committed without their consent. The leaders made their designs known to President Lincoln at Washington and to General McClellan at Cincinnati, and

CHAP XIX were assured of earnest sympathy and promised active help from the Ohio contingent of three months' volunteers whenever the decisive moment of need should arrive.

Notwithstanding the unmistakable signs of disaffection, Governor Letcher issued his proclamations and calls for State militia in Western Virginia as in other parts, and sent officers there to collect and organize it. These, however, soon returned discouraging reports: that feeling was very bitter; that Union organizations existed in most of the counties; that that section of the State was "verging on actual rebellion." The Confederate recruiting officers made so little headway that a few companies were sent from Eastern Virginia to Beverly as a nucleus around which to gather sufficient force to control the western end of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.

1861 But the counter revolution was more aggressive than secession. Under call from the Union men General McClellan, on May 26, ordered a movement of four regiments by the branch railroads from Wheeling and from Parkersburg to form a junction at Grafton. Their advance was slow, owing to the necessity of repairing railroad bridges which the enemy had burned; and the rebel commander, Colonel G. A. Porterfield, found plenty of time to retire with his small force to Philippi, a village in a secluded mountain valley, about fifteen miles south of Grafton. Here he hoped to make a lodgment from which he could return and obstruct or harass the railroad, but the Union leaders left him no time for offense. The West Virginians themselves had formed a regiment for the Government

under Colonel B. F. Kelley, who with a thorough local knowledge of the roads and country, projected and led a successful night march against Porterfield. On the morning of June 3, while the rebel officers were awaiting the abatement of a rain-storm to begin a retreat, the Union forces arriving by different routes suddenly appeared on opposite hills commanding the town, and Porterfield's camp, attacked in a complete surprise, was dispersed in an unceremonious rout. CHAP XIX

Under shelter and encouragement of this initial military success, the political scheme of forming a new State proceeded with accelerated ardor. As early as June 11, a delegate convention representing about forty counties lying between the crest of the Alleghanies and the Ohio River met and organized at Wheeling. On the 13th of June, after reciting the various treasonable usurpations of the Richmond Convention and Governor Letcher, it adopted a formal declaration that all the acts of the convention and executive were without authority and void, and declared vacated all executive, legislative, and judicial offices in the State held by those "who adhere to said convention and executive." On the 19th of June an ordinance was adopted creating a provisional State government, under which Francis H. Peirpoint was appointed Governor, to wield executive authority in conjunction with an executive council of five members. A Legislature was constituted by calling together such members-elect as would take a prescribed oath of allegiance to the United States and to the restored government of Virginia, and providing for filling the vacancies of those who refused. A similar pro-

CHAP XIX VISION continued or substituted other State and county officers. After adding sundry other ordinances to this groundwork of restoration, the convention on the 25th took a recess till August. The newly constituted Legislature soon met to enact laws for the provisional government; and on July 1861 9 it elected two United States Senators who were admitted to seats four days later.

So far the work was simply a repudiation of secession, and a restoration of the usurped government of the whole State. But the main motive and purpose of the counter revolution was not allowed to halt or fail. In August the Wheeling Convention re-assembled, and on the 20th adopted an ordinance creating the new State of Kanawha, and providing for a popular vote to be taken in the following October on the question of ratification.

In due time Governor Peirpoint organized his provisional government at Wheeling, and on June 1861 21 made formal application, under the Constitution of the United States, for aid from the General Government to suppress rebellion and protect the people against domestic violence. Secretary Cameron responded for the President that a large additional military force would soon be sent, and devolved the further organization of West Virginia troops upon the new Governor, who soon had four regiments in the field.

The Richmond authorities sought as quickly as possible to repair the Philippi disaster. They sent ex-Governor Henry A. Wise with the commission of a brigadier-general to the Kanawha Valley; while the more experienced General Robert S. Garnett, who had been a major in the United States

army, was charged with the duty of gathering up the débris of Porterfield's command, and making headway against the Union advance along the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. Lee from his headquarters at Richmond was anxious to break permanently this great line of communication between Washington and the West, and a special expedition had been devised some weeks before to operate against the important bridges and tunnels about the Cheat River. CHAP XIX

The long turnpike through the Alleghanies from Staunton to the Ohio branches at Beverly in the Cheat River valley, one line going to Buckhannon through a pass over Rich Mountain, the other going to Philippi through a pass in the same range seventeen miles further north, which is there named Laurel Hill. Supplied with partial reenforcements, Garnett fortified these two passes which he reported were the "gates to the northwestern country." Arriving near the end of June, he soon had Lieutenant-Colonel John Pegram established in the pass at Rich Mountain with a regiment and six guns, while he himself held the pass at Laurel Hill with three or four regiments, leaving a slight detachment behind them at Beverly. He frankly reported to Richmond that his circumstances were discouraging. His men were in a miserable condition as to clothing, arms, and equipments. But a still greater obstacle was the prevalence of an opposing public sentiment. "The Union men," he wrote, "are greatly in the ascendancy here, and are much more zealous and active in their cause than the secessionists. The enemy are kept fully advised of our movements, even to the strength of our scouts and

CHAP XIX

Garnett
to Deas,
June 25,
1861 W R
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pickets, by the country people, while we are compelled to grope in the dark as much as if we were invading a foreign and hostile country ”

Even had the surrounding conditions been better, the force which had been given to Garnett was altogether inadequate to his task. Early in July, McClellan went in person to West Virginia, and having a greatly superior army, resolved on an offensive campaign. He sent Brigadier-General T. A. Morris with five or six regiments to Philippi to confront Garnett at Laurel Hill and threaten a main attack, while he himself moved with seven regiments to Buckhannon, intending to turn the enemy's position on Rich Mountain. Pushing forward to Roaring Creek he found Pegram's camp near the west base of the mountain, and so strongly intrenched in a defile that McClellan hesitated to make a direct attack in front, even with numerical superiority of seven to one. On the same day on which this information of Pegram's position was obtained through a reconnaissance, Brigadier-General W. S. Rosecrans, commanding under McClellan, heard by accident that a young countryman, a well-informed neighborhood guide, was in his camp. He was forthwith brought to headquarters and interrogated by the general. He proved to be the son of a farmer named Hart, living on the turnpike on top of Rich Mountain, some two miles in rear of Pegram's camp. He had hunted and driven cattle about the woods and through the mountains and valleys of the vicinity all his boyhood, and knew the secret of every footpath and byway. He consented to act as guide to a flanking expedition, and Rosecrans

immediately gave preliminary orders for preparation. The general then laid his plan before McClellan, that he would endeavor to reach Hart's farm by a circuitous route, and returning by way of a turnpike would attack the rear of Pegram's intrenchments, while McClellan should attack in front. CHAP XIX

After some hesitation McClellan consented, and Rosecrans started on his march at daylight of July 11. His route lay south of the turnpike; and his approach was not suspected, because Pegram looked for a similar attempt north of it, and had given all his attention to intercept it in that direction. A rain-storm, lasting all the forenoon, also greatly favored the hidden march. By noon, climbing through ravines and thickets, his column was near the crest; but here his skirmishers were fired upon, and it was found that a rebel detachment of three hundred men with two guns had been sent back to guard the road, and had reached Hart's farm a little in advance, planted their guns, and hurriedly raised some slight defenses. Rosecrans, as soon as possible, placed his men in position to attack. "We formed at about three o'clock," says his report, "under cover of our skirmishers, guarding well against a flank attack from the direction of the rebels' position, and after a brisk fire, which threw the rebels into confusion, carried their position by a charge, driving them from behind some log breastworks, and pursued them into the thickets on the mountain. We captured twenty-one prisoners, two brass 6-pounders, fifty stands of arms, and some corn and provisions. Our loss was twelve killed and forty-nine wounded."

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Rosecrans
to Willm. M.,
July 13, 1861
W. R. Vol.
II, p. 217

CHAP XIX McClellan had moved up his forces and waited for the signal to attack Pegram's camp in front, but the expected message did not come. The cavalry sergeant sent by Rosecrans to carry it encountered a rebel picket, and was wounded and captured. When the fight was over, the day was already so far spent that the wearied volunteers went into bivouac on the battlefield. Pegram heard the firing and started with another detachment to reinforce his rear-guard, but only arrived at the moment of its defeat and dispersion. Finding himself thus caught between hostile forces, he returned, and that night made an effort to escape by abandoning his camp and marching northward along the mountain to join Garnett at Laurel Hill.

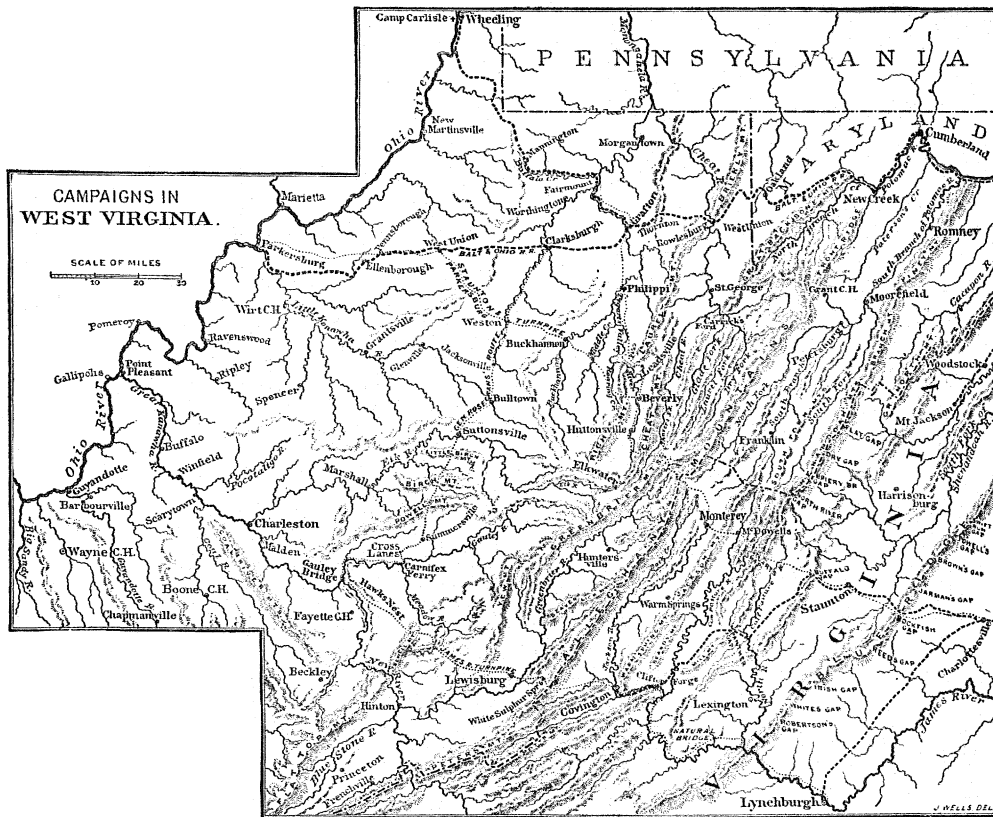
Heck, Re-
port W R
Vol II, p
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Pegram,
Report,
July 14, 1861
W R Vol
II, pp 264-
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1861.

On the following day, July 12, McClellan received news of the fight and the flight of Pegram. Marching forward he not only possessed himself of Pegram's camp, with its abandoned equipage and its four spiked guns, but pushed entirely over the mountain and occupied Beverly. That night he was further agreeably surprised by receiving a proposal from Pegram to surrender his remnant of six hundred men and officers with whom he had found it impossible to escape.

Garnett, already threatened at Laurel Hill by Morris, probably heard of Pegram's disaster, and started to retreat towards Beverly. But reaching Leedsville on the afternoon of the 12th, he learned that McClellan was already there. This forced him to take the only other route open to him, a rough and difficult mountain road northward by way of St. George and West Union. In this attempt his command of 3300 men and cumbrous train became



very much scattered and disorganized. Morris hurried forward an advance column of three Union regiments in pursuit, led by Captain H. W. Benham of the engineers, which came up with the rebel wagon-train at Carrick's Ford, one of the crossings of Cheat River, twenty-six miles northwest of Laurel Hill, about noon of July 13. Garnett was here in person looking after his retreat. He faced about his rear-guard, a single regiment, and planted three guns to command the road, in order to defend the ford. The effort, however, afforded him no relief. The three Union regiments advanced gallantly to the attack, one of them handsomely turning the position, upon which the rebel line broke and fled, abandoning one of its guns. Retreat and pursuit were continued to the next ford, perhaps a quarter of a mile further on, where Garnett was killed in a desultory skirmish-fire between sharp-shooters. The Union forces captured the wagon-train, one gun, two stands of colors, and fifty prisoners; but occupied with their trophies they abandoned the chase, and the bulk of Garnett's command made good its escape through the mountains.

It would be a great mistake to estimate this campaign in Western Virginia merely by the numbers engaged or the enemy overcome. As compared with the great campaigns and battles of the following year, Rich Mountain and Carrick's Ford shrink to the dimensions of ordinary skirmishes. But these two petty Union victories came to the longing hope of the North, hitherto vexed by delay and disappointment, as a great joy. Beyond their moral effects, they were attended by important and permanent political and military

CHAP XIX results. Rebellion never afterwards secured a foothold in upper Western Virginia; and in the Kanawha Valley the enemy was, with fluctuating movements, manœuvered out of position and out of the country during the remainder of the year. Thus the military frontier was definitely forced back, and the political transformation of the State, begun by the Wheeling Convention, went on unchecked until, in June, 1863, West Virginia was formally admitted to the Union as a separate and sovereign State.

One of the most marked results of the campaign was upon the personal fortunes of McClellan. He had planned for himself a broad and brilliant movement, and entered upon it with abundant means and full confidence of success. "Have directed movement in force up the Great Kanawha," he telegraphed to Washington on July 6th, "and other movements of troops covering nearly the whole of Western Virginia. . . By the 8th or 9th at latest I expect to occupy Beverly, fighting a battle in the mean while. I propose to drive the enemy over the mountains towards Staunton, and expect your further orders by telegraph whether to move on Staunton on the south or towards Wytheville." Not only sanguine about his present undertakings, he was already reaching forward to secure more extended tasks and responsibilities for the future. "Newspaper reports," he telegraphed the following day, "say that my department is to be broken up. I hope the general will leave under my control both the operations on the Mississippi and in Western Virginia. If he cannot do so, the Indiana and Ohio troops are necessary to my suc-

McClellan
to Towns-
end, July
6, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 199

cess. With these means at my disposal, and such resources as I command in Virginia, if the Government will give me ten thousand arms for distribution in eastern Tennessee I think I can break the backbone of secession. Please instruct whether to move on Staunton or on to Wytheville." CHAP XIX

McClellan
to Towns-
end July
7, 1861
W. R. Vol
II, p 201

General Scott cautioned him against his Staunton or Wytheville project as making his line dangerously long, but he watched his progress with eager interest and sent him frequent words of encouragement. "The General-in-Chief, and what is more, the Cabinet, including the President, are charmed with your activity, valor, and consequent successes of Rich Mountain the 11th, and of Beverly this morning. We do not doubt that you will in due time sweep the rebels from Western Virginia, but we do not mean to precipitate you as you are fast enough." Even while this telegram was going to him, the additional success at Carrick's Ford was being gained. When therefore on the following day McClellan summed up in a single laconic dispatch the scattered and disconnected incidents of three different days, happening forty miles apart, the impression (without design on his part) was most naturally produced upon the authorities and

Gen Scott
to McClel-
lan, July
13, 1861
W. R. Vol
II, p 204

1"HUTTONSVILLE, VA,

"July 14, 1861

"COLONEL TOWNSEND · Garnett and forces routed; his baggage and one gun taken, his army demoralized, Garnett killed. We have annihilated the enemy in Western Virginia and have lost thirteen killed, and not more than forty wounded. We have in all killed at least two hundred of the enemy, and their prisoners will amount to at least one thou-

sand. Have taken seven guns in all. I still look for the capture of the remnant of Garnett's army by General Hill. The troops defeated are the crack regiments of Eastern Virginia, aided by Georgians, Tennesseans, and Carolinians. Our success is complete and secession is killed in this country — GEORGE B. MCCLELLAN, Major-General Commanding." McClellan to Townsend, July 14, 1861. W. R. Vol II, p 204.

CHAP XIX the country that so sweeping and effective a campaign could only be the work of a military genius of the first order. McClellan was the unquestioned hero of the hour. The éclat of this achievement soon called him to Washington, and in the train of events which followed had no insignificant influence in securing his promotion on the first of November following, without further victories, to the command of all the armies of the United States.

CHAPTER XX

BULL RUN¹

IT had been arranged that McDowell's advance against the enemy at Manassas should begin on July 9; by dint of extraordinary exertions he was ready and issued his marching orders on July 16. But his organization was very imperfect and his preparations were far from complete. Many of his regiments reached him but two days before, and some only on the day he moved. He started with barely wagons enough for his ammunition and hospital supplies; tents, baggage, and rations were to follow. The utmost caution was enjoined to avoid another Vienna or Big Bethel disaster. Three things, his marching orders said, would be held unpardonable: "*First*. To come upon a battery or a breastwork without a knowledge of its position. *Second*. To be surprised. *Third*. To fall back."

His army being a new, untried machine, his men unused to the fatigues and privations of a march, progress was slow. With a cumbersome movement it felt its way towards Fairfax Court House and Centreville, the outposts of the enemy having sufficient time to retire as it advanced. Brigadier-

CHAP XX

McDowell,
Orders,
July 16, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 303

McDowell,
Testimony,
Report of
the Com-
mittee on
Conduct of
the War

¹ For a more detailed account of the battle of Bull Run, see Nicolay, "The Outbreak of Rebellion," pp. 169-205.

CHAP XX General Daniel Tyler commanded his first division, of four brigades; Colonel David Hunter the second division, of two brigades; Colonel S. P. Heintzelman the third division, of three brigades; and Colonel Dixon S. Miles the fifth division, of two brigades. The fourth division, under Brigadier-General Theodore Runyon, was left behind to guard communications. His total command embraced an aggregate of 34,320 men; his marching column proper consisted of a little less than 28,000 men, including artillery, a total of forty-nine guns, and a single battalion of cavalry.

1861

When, on the morning of July 18, Tyler reached Centreville, he found that the enemy had everywhere retired behind the line of Bull Run, a winding, sluggish stream flowing southeasterly towards the Potomac, about thirty-two miles southwest of Washington. While it is fordable in many places, it generally has steep and sometimes precipitous and rocky banks with wooded heights on the west. Three miles beyond the stream lies Manassas Junction on a high, open plateau. Here the railroads, from Richmond on the south and the Shenandoah Valley on the west, come together. To protect this junction the rebels had some slight field-works, armed with fourteen or fifteen heavy guns, and garrisoned by about 2000 men. Beauregard, in command since the 1st of June, had gathered an army of nearly 22,000 men and twenty-nine guns. The independent command of T. H. Holmes, called up from Aquia Creek, augmented his force to a little over 23,000 men and thirty-five guns. Instead of keeping this about the Manassas earth-works he had brought it close down to the banks of

Bull Run and posted it along a line some seven miles in length, extending from the Manassas railroad to the stone bridge on the Warrenton turnpike, and guarding the five intermediate fords. CHAP XX

The enemy retired from Centreville as Tyler approached that place; and, taking a light detachment to make a reconnaissance, he followed their main body towards the crossing of Bull Run at Blackburn's Ford, near the center of Beauregard's extended line. Tyler was under express orders to observe well the roads, but not to bring on an engagement. Apparently lured on, however, by the hitherto easy approach, his reconnaissance became a skirmish, and, calling up support, the skirmish became a preliminary battle. Before he was well aware of it sixty men had fallen, two exposed field-pieces had been with difficulty extricated, one regiment had retreated in confusion, and three others were deployed in line of battle, to make a new charge. At this point Tyler remembered his instructions and called off his troops. This reverse at Blackburn's Ford, so apparently without necessity or advantage, seriously chilled the fine spirit in which the army started on its march. The attacking detachment did not then know that the enemy had suffered equal loss and demoralization.

McDowell began his campaign with the purpose of turning the right flank of the enemy at Union Mills; but the examinations made on the 18th satisfied him that the narrow roads and rough country in that direction made such a movement impracticable. When, in addition, he heard Tyler's cannonade on the same day, he hurried forward his divisions to Centreville; but the report of that

McDowell
to Tyler,
July 18, 1861
W. P. Vol
II, p. 312

CHAP XX

McDowell
to Towns-
end, July
20, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 308

Barnard,
Report,
July 29, 1861
W R Vol
II, pp 328-
331

Gen Scott
to Patter-
son, July
13, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 168

Ibid,
July 17, 1861
W R Vol
II, pp 167,
168

Ibid,
July 18, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 168

day's engagement also seemed to prove it inexpedient to make a direct attack. That night McDowell assembled his division commanders at Centreville and confidentially informed them that he had changed his original plan, and resolved to march westward and turn Beauregard's left flank. All of Friday, the 19th, and Saturday, the 20th, were spent in an effort of the engineers to find an unfortified ford over Bull Run in that direction; and thus the main battle was postponed till Sunday, July 21. During those two days, while McDowell's army was supplied with rations, the strength of the enemy in his front was greatly increased.

McDowell's movement was based upon the understanding and promise that Patterson should hold Johnston in the Shenandoah Valley, and General Scott made every exertion to redeem this promise. On the 13th he directed Patterson to detain Johnston "in the valley of Winchester"; and as the critical time approached, and hearing no official report from him for three whole days, he sent him a sharp admonition: "Do not let the enemy amuse and delay you with a small force in front, whilst he reenforces the [Manassas] Junction with his main body." And still more emphatically on the 18th, while the engagement of Blackburn's Ford was being fought by McDowell's troops: "I have certainly been expecting you to beat the enemy. If not, to hear that you had felt him strongly, or at least had occupied him by threats and demonstrations. You have been at least his equal, and, I suppose, superior in numbers. Has he not stolen a march and sent reenforcements towards Manassas Junction? A week is enough to win victories."

Patterson was touched by the implied censure, and answered restively: "The enemy has stolen no march upon me. I have kept him actively employed, and by threats and reconnaissances in force caused him to be reenforced." But the facts did not bear out the assertion. The enemy was at that moment making the stolen march which Scott feared, and of which Patterson remained in profound ignorance till two days later.

CHAP XX

Patterson
to Towns-
end, July
18, 1861
W. R. Vol
II, p 168

Since the 9th of July his readiness to "offer battle," or to "strike" when the proper moment should arrive, had oozed away. He became clamorous for reenforcements, and profuse of complaints. Making no energetic reconnaissance to learn the truth, and crediting every exaggerated rumor, he became impressed that he was "in face of an enemy far superior in numbers." Understanding perfectly the nature and importance of his assigned task, and admitting in his dispatches that "this force is the key-stone of the combined movements"; ambitious to perform a brilliant act, and commanding abundant means to execute his plan, his energy failed in the trying moment. "To-morrow I advance to Bunker Hill," he reported on July 14, "preparatory to the other movement. If an opportunity offers, I shall attack." Reaching Bunker Hill on the 15th, he was within nine miles of the enemy. His opportunity was at hand. Johnston had only 12,000 men all told; Patterson, from 18,000 to 22,000. All that and the following day he must have been torn by conflicting emotions. He was both seeking and avoiding a battle. He had his orders written out for an attack. But it would appear that his chief-of-staff,

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Patterson
to Towns-
end, July
14, 1861
W. R. Vol
II, p 166

CHAP XX Fitz-John Porter, together with Colonels J. J. Abercrombie and George H. Thomas, at the last moment persuaded him to change his mind.

1861

Making only a slight reconnoissance on the 16th, he late that night countermanded his orders, and on July 17 marched to Charlestown—nominally as a flank movement, but practically in retreat. Johnston, the Confederate commander, was at Winchester, in daily anticipation of Patterson's attack, when at midnight of July 17 he received orders to go at once to the help of Beauregard at Manassas. By nine o'clock on the morning of the 18th his scouts brought him information that Patterson's army was at Charlestown. Relieved thus unexpectedly from a menace of danger which otherwise he could neither have resisted nor escaped, he lost no time. At noon of the same day he had his whole effective force of nine thousand men on the march; by noon of Saturday, July 20, six thousand of them, with twenty guns, were in Beauregard's camp at Bull Run, ready to resist McDowell's attack.

The Union army lay encamped about Centreville; from there the Warrenton turnpike ran westward over a stone bridge, crossing Bull Run to Gainesville, several miles beyond. Unaware that Johnston had joined Beauregard, McDowell desired to seize Gainesville, a station on the railroad, to prevent such a junction. The stone bridge was thought to be defended in force, besides being mined, ready to be blown up. The engineers, however, late on Saturday, obtained information that Sudley Ford, two or three miles above, could be readily carried and crossed by an attacking column.

On Saturday night, therefore, McDowell called his officers together and announced his plan of battle for the following day. Tyler's division was ordered to advance on the Warrenton turnpike and threaten the stone bridge, while Hunter and Heintzelman, with their divisions, should make a circuitous and secret night march, seize and cross Sudley Ford, and descending on the enemy's side of Bull Run should carry the batteries at the stone bridge by a rear attack, whereby Tyler would be able to cross and join in the main battle.

CHAP XX

McDowell,
Orders,
July 20, 1861
W. R. Vol
II, p. 325

Beauregard, on his part, also planned an aggressive movement for that same Sunday morning. No sooner had Johnston arrived than he proposed that the Confederates should sally from their intrenchments, cross the five fords of Bull Run they were guarding, march by the various converging roads to Centreville, and surprise and crush the Union army in its camps. The orders for such an advance and attack were duly written out, and Johnston, as ranking officer, signed his approval of them in the gray twilight of Sunday morning. But it proved wasted labor. At sunrise Tyler's signal guns announced the Union advance and attack. The original plan was thereupon abandoned, and Beauregard proposed a modification — to stand on the defensive with their left flank at the stone bridge, and attack with their right from the region of Blackburn's Ford. This suggestion again Johnston adopted and ordered to be carried out.

Beauregard, Report
W. R. Vol
II, pp. 484-486. Also
Johnston, "Narrative," pp. 41, 42, 47.
Compare also Johnston in "Battles and Leaders" Vol I, p. 246.

There had been confusion and delay in the outset of McDowell's march, and the flanking route around by Sudley Ford had proved unexpectedly

CHAP XX long. Tyler's feigned attack at the stone bridge was so feeble and inefficient that it betrayed its object; the real attack by Hunter and Heintzelman, designed to begin at daylight, could not be made until near eleven o'clock. The first sharp encounter took place about two-thirds of a mile north of the Warrenton turnpike; some five regiments on each side being engaged. The rebels tenaciously held their line for an hour. But the Union column was constantly swelling with arriving batteries and regiments. Tyler's division found a ford, and crossing Bull Run a short distance above the stone bridge, three of its brigades joined Hunter and Heintzelman. About twelve o'clock the Confederate line, composed mainly of Johnston's troops, wavered and broke, and was swept back across and out of the valley of the Warrenton turnpike, and down the road running southward from Sudley Ford to Manassas Junction.

The commanders and other officers on both sides were impressed with the conviction that this conflict of the forenoon had decided the fortunes of the day. Beauregard's plan to make a counter-attack from his right flank against Centreville had failed through a miscarriage of orders; and leaving Johnston at headquarters to watch the entire field, he hastened personally to endeavor to check the tide of defeat. Brigadier-General T. J. Jackson, who on this field gained his sobriquet of "Stonewall," had already formed his fresh brigade, also of Johnston's army, on the crest of a ridge known as the Henry Hill, half a mile south of the Warrenton turnpike. Other regiments and batteries were hurried up, until they constituted a semicircular line of

twelve regiments, twenty-two guns, and two companies of cavalry, strongly posted and well hidden in the edge of a piece of woods behind the screen of a thick growth of young pines. CHAP XX

At half-past two o'clock in the afternoon, McDowell attacked this second position of the enemy with an immediately available force of about fourteen regiments, twenty-four guns, and a single battalion of cavalry. Here the advantages of position were all strongly against him. The enemy was posted, concealed, and his artillery concentrated; while McDowell's brigades were at the foot of the hill, not only where the ascent must be made in open view, but where the nature of the ground rendered a united advance impossible. A series of successive and detached assaults followed. Two batteries that had been posted near the crest of the hill in advance of the main body of infantry were lost by mistaking a rebel for a Union regiment; and, because of the lax organization and want of discipline in the raw volunteer regiments, the strength of McDowell's command melted away in a rapid demoralization. The scales of victory, however, yet vibrated in uncertainty, until at four in the afternoon the remainder of Johnston's army arrived, and seven fresh rebel regiments were thrown against the extreme right and partly in rear of the Union line.

This heavy numerical overweight at a decisive time and place terminated the battle very suddenly. The abundant rumors that Johnston was coming to the help of Beauregard seemed verified; and the Union regiments, ignorant of the fact that they had been successfully fighting part of his force

CHAP XX all day, were seized with a panic, and began by a common impulse to move in retreat. The suddenness of their victory was as unexpected to the rebel as to the Union commanders. Jefferson Davis, who had come from Richmond, arriving at Manassas at four o'clock, was informed that the battle was lost, and was implored by his companions not to endanger his personal safety by riding to the front. Nevertheless he persisted, and was overjoyed to find that the Union army had, by a sudden and unexplained impulse, half run, half marched from the field.

The rebel detachments of cavalry hung about the line of retreat, but they dared not venture a serious attack; and so unconvinced were they as yet of the final result, that that night the rebel commanders set a strong and vigilant guard in all directions against the expected return, and offensive operations by McDowell next morning. The precaution was needless, for the Union army was so much demoralized that the commanders deemed it unsafe to make a stand at Centreville, where the reserves were posted; and a rapid though orderly retreat was continued through the night, and until all organized regiments or fragments reached their old camps within the fortifications on the Potomac, and the scattered fugitives made their way across the river into the city of Washington.

Patterson had been charged with the duty of defeating or holding Johnston in the Shenandoah Valley; he had a double force with which to perform his task. Had he done so, McDowell, who in that case would have been superior in numbers to Beauregard, and whose plans were in the main judicious, could easily have conquered. It was

Johnston's army, which Patterson had permitted to escape, that principally fought the battle of Bull Run and defeated McDowell.¹ Nor is there good sense in that criticism which lays the blame upon General Scott and the Administration for not having first united the two Federal armies. The Administration furnished a superior force against Beauregard at Bull Run, and an overwhelming force against Johnston at Winchester, and assured victory in each locality by the only reliable condition—other things being equal—an excess of numbers. Had Patterson held his foe, as he might, and McDowell defeated Beauregard, as he should have done, the capture of Johnston's force between the two Federal armies was practically certain, as General Scott intended.

Scott was aware of the danger which Patterson's negligence had created. "It is known that a strong reinforcement left Winchester on the afternoon of the 18th, which you will also have to beat," he telegraphed McDowell on the day of the battle, when it was too late to countermand the attack. He also promised him immediate reinforcements. The confidence of the General-in-Chief remained unshaken, and he telegraphed McClellan: "McDowell is this forenoon forcing the passage of

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Gen Scott
to McClellan, July
18, 1861
W R Vol.
II, p 743

Gen Scott
to McDowell, July
21, 1861
W R Vol.
II, p 746
Gen Scott,
Testimony,
Report of
the Com-
mittee on
Conduct of
the War

¹ The following analysis of the forces engaged in the main and decisive phases of the actual fighting shows it conclusively.

	JOHNSTON'S ARMY		BEAUREGARD'S ARMY	
	<i>Regs</i>	<i>Guns</i>	<i>Regs</i>	<i>Guns</i>
Battle of the morning	4	4	1	2
Battle of the afternoon	9	16	3	6
Final flank attack which created the panic	3	4	4	0
	16	24	8	8

CHAP XX

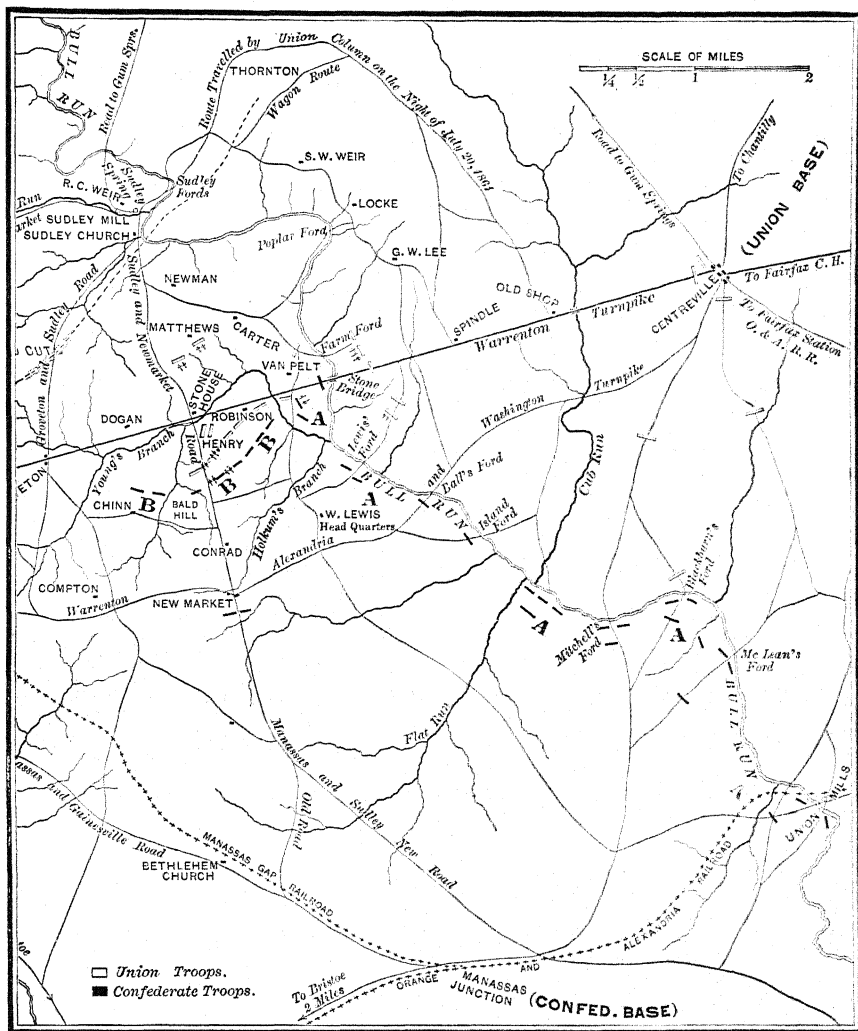
Gen Scott
to McClel-
lan, July
21, 1861

W R Vol
II, p 746

Bull Run. In two hours he will turn the Manassas Junction and storm it to-day with superior force."

It may well be supposed that President Lincoln suffered great anxiety during that eventful Sunday; but General Scott talked confidently of success, and Lincoln bore his impatience without any visible sign, and quietly went to church at eleven o'clock. Soon after noon copies of telegrams began to come to him at the Executive Mansion from the War Department and from army headquarters. They brought, however, no certain information, as they came only from the nearest station to the battlefield, and simply gave what the operator saw and heard. Towards three o'clock they became more frequent, and reported considerable fluctuation in the apparent course and progress of the cannonade. The President went to the office of General Scott, where he found the general asleep, and woke him to talk over the news. Scott said such reports were worth nothing as indications either way—that the changes in the currents of wind and the variation of the echoes made it impossible for a distant listener to determine the course of a battle. He still expressed his confidence in a successful result, and composed himself for another nap when the President left.

Dispatches continued to come about every ten or fifteen minutes, still based on hearing and hearsay; the rumors growing more cheering and definite. They reported that the battle had extended along nearly the whole line; that there had been considerable loss; but that the secession lines had been driven back two or three miles, some of the



OUTLINE MAP OF THE FIRST BATTLE OF BULL RUN.

A, A, A, A, A. General line of Confederate dispositions during the skirmish at Mitchell's and Blackburn's Fords (July 18), and until the morning of the main engagement (July 21).
 B, B, B. General line of Confederate dispositions, made to repel McDowell's flank attack by the Sudley and Newmarket Road. The Union dispositions are represented as they were at the climax of the fighting on the Henry plateau.

dispatches said, to the Junction. One of General Scott's aides also brought the telegram of an engineer, repeating that McDowell had driven the enemy before him, that he had ordered the reserves to cross Bull Run, and wanted reinforcements without delay.

CHAP. XX

Mendell to
Thom 18,
July 21, 1861,
W⁴ R⁴ M⁴ Vol
II, p 747

The aide further stated substantially that the general was satisfied of the truth of this report, and that McDowell would immediately attack and capture the Junction, perhaps to-night, but certainly by to-morrow noon. Deeming all doubt at an end, President Lincoln ordered his carriage and went out to take his usual evening drive.

He had not returned when, at six o'clock, Secretary Seward came to the Executive Mansion, pale and haggard. "Where is the President?" he asked hoarsely of the private secretaries. "Gone to drive," they answered. "Have you any late news?" he continued. They read him the telegrams which announced victory. "Tell no one," said he. "That is not true. The battle is lost. The telegraph says that McDowell is in full retreat, and calls on General Scott to save the capital. Find the President and tell him to come immediately to General Scott's."

Half an hour later the President returned from his drive, and his private secretaries gave him Seward's message, the first intimation he received of the trying news. He listened in silence, without the slightest change of feature or expression, and walked away to army headquarters. There he read the unwelcome report in a telegram from a captain of engineers: "General McDowell's army in full retreat through Centre-

CHAP XX
Alexander,
July 21, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 747

ville. The day is lost. Save Washington and the remnants of this army. . . The routed troops will not re-form." This information was such an irreconcilable contradiction of the former telegram that General Scott utterly refused to believe it. That one officer should report the army beyond Bull Run, driving the enemy and ordering up reserves, and another immediately report it three miles this side of Bull Run, in hopeless retreat and demoralization, seemed an impossibility. Yet the impossible had indeed come to pass; and the apparent change of fortune had been nearly as sudden on the battlefield as in Washington.

McDowell
to Towns-
end, July
21, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 316

The President and the Cabinet met at General Scott's office, and awaited further news in feverish suspense, until a telegram from McDowell confirmed the disaster. Discussion was now necessarily turned to preparation for the future. All available troops were hurried forward to McDowell's support; Baltimore was put on the alert; telegrams were sent to the recruiting stations of the nearest Northern States to lose no time in sending all their organized regiments to Washington; McClellan was ordered to "come down to the Shenandoah Valley with such troops as can be spared from Western Virginia."

Gen Scott
to McClel-
lan, July
21, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 749

A great number of civilians, newspaper correspondents, and several Senators and Representatives had followed McDowell's army to Centreville; Representative Alfred Ely of New York, went to the battlefield itself, and was captured and sent for a long sojourn in Libby Prison at Richmond. Such of these non-combatants as had been fortunate enough to keep their horses and

vehicles were the first to reach Washington, arriving about midnight. President Lincoln had returned to the Executive Mansion, and reclining on a lounge in the Cabinet room he heard from several of these eye-witnesses their excited and exaggerated narratives, in which the rush and terror and unseemly stampede of lookers-on and army teamsters were altogether disproportionate and almost exclusive features. The President did not go to his bed that night; morning found him still on his lounge in the executive office, hearing repetitions of these recitals and making memoranda of his own conclusions. CHAP. XX.

As the night elapsed, the news seemed to grow worse. McDowell's first dispatch stated that he would hold Centreville. His second, that "the larger part of the men are a confused mob, entirely demoralized"; but he said that he would attempt to make a stand at Fairfax Court House. His third reported from that point that "many of the volunteers did not wait for authority to proceed to the Potomac, but left on their own decision. They are now pouring through this place in a state of utter disorganization. . . I think now, as all of my commanders thought at Centreville, there is no alternative but to fall back to the Potomac." Reports from other points generally confirmed the prevalence of confusion and disorganization. Monday morning the scattered fugitives reached the bridges over the Potomac, and began rushing across them into Washington. It was a gloomy and dismal day. A drizzling rain set in which lasted thirty-six hours. Many a panic-stricken volunteer remembered afterwards with gratitude, that when he was

McDowell
to Towns-
end, July
21, 1861.
W. R. Vol.
II., p. 316.

Ibid.,
July 22, 1861.
W. R. Vol.
II., p. 316.

CHAP XX wandering footsore, exhausted, and hungry through the streets of the capital, her loyal families opened their cheerful doors to give him food, rest, and encouragement.

McDowell,
Report,
Aug 4, 1861
W R Vol
II, p. 325

One of the principal reasons which prevented McDowell's making a stand at Centreville or Fairfax Court House was the important fact that the term of service of the three months' militia, organized under President Lincoln's first proclamation, was about to expire. "In the next few days," says McDowell in his report, "day by day I should have lost ten thousand of the best armed, drilled, officered, and disciplined troops in the army." This vital consideration equally affected the armies at other points; and bearing it, as well as the local exigency, in mind, the President and the Cabinet determined on several changes of army leadership. McDowell was continued in command on the Virginia side of the Potomac, with fifteen regiments to defend and hold the forts. McClellan was called to Washington to take local command, and more especially to organize a new army out of the three years' regiments which were just beginning to come in from the various States. Patterson was only a three months' general, appointed by the Governor of Pennsylvania; his time expired, and he was mustered out of service. Banks was sent to Harper's Ferry to succeed him. Dix was put in command at Baltimore, and Rosecrans in Western Virginia.

By noon of Monday the worst aspects of the late defeat were known; and especially the reassuring fact that the enemy was making no pursuit; and so far as possible immediate dangers were provided

against. The War Department was soon able to reply to anxious inquiries from New York: "Our loss is much less than was at first represented, and the troops have reached the forts in much better condition than we expected." "We are making most vigorous efforts to concentrate a large and irresistible army at this point. Regiments are arriving. . . Our works on the south bank of the Potomac are impregnable, being well manned with reenforcements. The capital is safe." On the following day Lincoln in person visited some of the forts and camps about Arlington Heights, and addressed the regiments with words of cheer and confidence.

CHAP. XX

Cameron to
Stetson,
Ginnell,
and others,
July 22, 1861
W. R. Vol
II, p. 796

Compared with the later battles of the civil war, the battle of Bull Run involved but a very moderate loss in men and material.¹ Its political and moral results, however, were widespread and enduring. The fact that the rebel army suffered about equal damage in numbers of killed and wounded, and that it was crippled so as to be unable for months to resume the offensive, could not be immediately known. The flushed hope of the South magnified the achievement as a demonstration of Southern invincibility. The event of a pitched battle won gave the rebellion and the Confederate Government a standing and a sudden respectability before foreign powers it had hardly dared hope for. With the then personal Govern-

¹ The official reports show a loss to the Union side in the battle of Bull Run of 25 guns (the Confederates claim 28), 481 men killed, 1011 men wounded, and 1421 (wounded and other Union soldiers) sent as prisoners to Richmond. On the Confederate side the loss was 387 killed, 1582 wounded, and a few prisoners taken—W. R. Vol II, pp 327, 328, 570, 571.

CHAP XX ment of France, and with the commercial classes whose influence always rules the Government of England, it gained at once a scarcely disguised active sympathy.

Upon the irritated susceptibilities, the wounded loyalty, the sanguine confidence of the North, the Bull Run defeat fell with cruel bitterness. The eager hopes built on the victories in Western Virginia were dashed to the ground. Here was a fresher and deeper humiliation than Sumter or Baltimore. But though her nerves winced, her will never faltered. She was both chastened and strengthened in the trial. For the moment, however, irritation and disappointment found vent in loud complaint and blind recrimination. One or two curious incidents in this ordeal of criticism may perhaps be cited.

A few days after the battle, in a conversation at the White House with several Illinois Members of Congress, in the presence of the President and the Secretary of War, General Scott himself was so far nettled by the universal chagrin and fault-finding that he lost his temper and sought an entirely uncalled-for self-justification. "Sir, I am the greatest coward in America," said he. "I will prove it. I have fought this battle, sir, against my judgment; I think the President of the United States ought to remove me to-day for doing it. As God is my judge, after my superiors had determined to fight it, I did all in my power to make the army efficient. I deserve removal because I did not stand up, when my army was not in a condition for fighting, and resist it to the last." The President said, "Your conversation seems to imply that I forced you to

fight this battle." General Scott then said, "I have never served a President who has been kinder to me than you have been." Representative William A. Richardson, who in a complaining speech in Congress related the scene, then drew the inference that Scott intended to pay a personal compliment to Mr. Lincoln, but that he did not mean to exonerate the Cabinet; and when pressed by questions, further explained: "Let us have no misunderstanding about this matter. My colleagues understood that I gave the language as near as I could. Whether I have been correctly reported or not I do not know. If I did not then make the correct statement, let me do it now. I did not understand General Scott, nor did I mean so to be understood, as implying that the President had forced him to fight that battle."

"Globe,"
July 24 and
Aug. 1, 1861,
pp. 246 and
387.

The incident illustrates how easily history may be perverted by hot-blooded criticism. Scott's irritation drove him to an inaccurate statement of events; Richardson's partisanship warped Scott's error to a still more unjustifiable deduction, and both reasoned from a changed condition of things. Two weeks before, Scott was confident of victory, and Richardson chafing at military inaction.

Historical judgment of war is subject to an inflexible law, either very imperfectly understood or very constantly lost sight of. Military writers love to fight over the campaigns of history exclusively by the rules of the professional chess-board, always subordinating, often totally ignoring, the element of politics. This is a radical error. Every war is begun, dominated, and ended by political considerations; without a nation, without a Government,

CHAP XX without money or credit, without popular enthusiasm which furnishes volunteers, or public support which endures conscription, there could be no army and no war—neither beginning nor end of methodical hostilities. War and politics, campaign and statecraft, are Siamese twins, inseparable and interdependent; and to talk of military operations without the direction and interference of an Administration is as absurd as to plan a campaign without recruits, pay, or rations.

Applied to the Bull Run campaign, this law of historical criticism analyzes and fixes the responsibilities of government and commanders with easy precision. When Lincoln, on June 29, assembled his council of war, the commanders, as military experts, correctly decided that the existing armies—properly handled—could win a victory at Manassas and a victory at Winchester, at or near the same time. General Scott correctly objected that these victories, if won, would not be decisive; and that in a military point of view it would be wiser to defer any offensive campaign until the following autumn. Here the President and the Cabinet, as political experts, intervened, and on their part decided, correctly, that the public temper would not admit of such a delay. Thus the Administration was responsible for the forward movement, Scott for the combined strategy of the two armies, McDowell for the conduct of the Bull Run battle, Patterson for the escape of Johnston, and Fate for the panic; for the opposing forces were equally raw, equally undisciplined, and as a whole fought the battle with equal courage and gallantry.

But such an analysis of causes and such an ap-
portionment of responsibilities could not be made
by the public, or even by the best-informed individ-
uals beyond Cabinet circles, in the first fortnight
succeeding the Bull Run disaster. All was con-
fused rumor, blind inference, seething passion.
That the public at large and the touch-and-go
newspaper writers should indulge in harsh and
hasty language is scarcely to be wondered at; but
the unseemly and precipitate judgments and criti-
cisms of those holding the rank of leadership in
public affairs are less to be excused. Men were
not yet tempered to the fiery ordeal of revolution,
and still thought and spoke under the strong im-
pulse of personal prejudice, and with that untamed
extravagance which made politics such a chaos in
the preceding winter.

That feeling, momentarily quelled and repressed
by the rebel guns at Sumter, was now in danger of
breaking out afresh. In illustration we need only
to cite the words of prominent leaders in the three
parties of the North, namely: Stanton, late Buch-
anan's Attorney-General, and destined soon to
become famous as Lincoln's War Secretary; Rich-
ardson, who had been the trusted lieutenant of
Douglas, and now, since Douglas was dead, the
ostensible spokesman of the faction which had
followed that leader; and thirdly, Horace Greeley,
exercising so prominent an influence upon the
public opinion of the country through the columns
of "The Tribune."

The Buchanan Cabinet was still writhing under
the odium which fell upon the late Administration,
and much more severely upon the Breckinridge

CHAP XX Democracy. Mr. Buchanan and his Cabinet were eager to seize upon every shadow of self-justification, and naturally not slow to emphasize any apparent shortcoming of their successors. Stanton, with his impulsive nature, was especially severe on the new President and Administration. In his eyes the only hope of the country lay in the members of Buchanan's reconstructed Cabinet. Thus he wrote to his colleague DIX, on June 11, in language that resembled a stump speech of the Presidential campaign :

1861

No one can imagine the deplorable condition of this city and the hazard of the Government, who did not witness the weakness and panic of the Administration, and the painful imbecility of Lincoln. We looked to New York in that dark hour as our only deliverance under Providence, and, thank God, it came. But when we witness venality and corruption growing in power every day, and controlling the millions of money that should be a patriotic sacrifice for national deliverance, and treating the treasure of the nation as a booty to be divided among thieves, hope dies away. Deliverance from this danger also must come from New York. Of military affairs I can form no judgment. Every day affords fresh proof of the design to give the war a party direction. The army appointments appear (with two or three exceptions only) to be bestowed on persons whose only claim is their Republicanism—broken-down politicians without experience, ability, or any other merit. Democrats are rudely repulsed, or scowled upon with jealous and ill-concealed aversion. The Western Democracy are already becoming disgusted, and between the corruption of some of the Republican leaders and the self-seeking ambition of others some great disaster may soon befall the nation. How long will the Democracy of New York tolerate these things? We hoped to see you here, especially after you had accepted the appointment of major-general. But now that the Administration has got over its panic, you are not the kind of man that would be welcome.

Morgan
DIX,
"Memoirs
of John A.
DIX," Vol
II, pp 19,
20

This letter plainly enough shows Mr. Stanton's attitude towards the new Administration. His letter of the following day to ex-President Buchanan reveals the state of feeling entertained by Dix. CHAP XX

The recent appointments in the army are generally spoken of with great disapprobation. General Dix is very much chagrined with the treatment he has received from the War Department, and on Saturday I had a letter declaring his intention to resign immediately.

"North
American
Review,"
Nov., 1879,
p. 480

Again, July 16:

1861

General Dix is still here. He has been shamefully treated by the Administration. We are expecting a general battle to be commenced at Fairfax to-day, and conflicting opinions of the result are entertained.

"North
American
Review,"
Nov., 1879,
p. 482

And once more, on July 26:

1861

The dreadful disaster of Sunday can scarcely be mentioned. The imbecility of this Administration culminated in that catastrophe; an irretrievable misfortune and national disgrace, never to be forgotten, are to be added to the ruin of all peaceful pursuits and national bankruptcy as the result of Lincoln's "running the machine" for five months. You perceive that Bennett is for a change of the Cabinet, and proposes for one of the new Cabinet Mr. Holt. . It is not unlikely that some change in the War and Navy Departments may take place, but none beyond these two departments until Jefferson Davis turns out the whole concern. The capture of Washington seems now to be inevitable; during the whole of Monday and Tuesday it might have been taken without any resistance. The rout, overthrow, and utter demoralization of the whole army is complete. Even now I doubt whether any serious opposition to the entrance of the Confederate forces could be offered. While Lincoln, Scott, and the Cabinet are disputing who is to blame, the city is unguarded and the enemy at hand. General McClellan reached here last evening. But if he had the ability of Cæsar, Alexander, or Napoleon, what can he

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"North
American
Review,"
Nov., 1879,
pp 482, 483

accomplish? Will not Scott's jealousy, Cabinet intrigues, Republican interference, thwart him at every step? While hoping for the best, I cannot shut my eyes against the dangers that beset the Government, and especially this city. It is certain that Davis was in the field on Sunday, and the secessionists here assert that he headed in person the last victorious charge. General Dix is in Baltimore. After three weeks' neglect and insult he was sent there.

While Stanton and Dix were thus nursing their secret griefs on behalf of one of the late political factions, Richardson, as the spokesman of the Douglas wing of the Democracy, was indulging in loud complaints for the other. Charging that the division of the Democratic party at Charleston had brought the present calamity upon the Union, he continued:

This organization of the Breckinridge party was for the purpose of destroying the Government. That was its purpose and its object. What do we see? Without the aid and cooperation of the men of the North that party was powerless. The men from the Northern States who aided and encouraged this organization which is in rebellion are at the head to-day of our army. Butler of Massachusetts, Dix of New York, and Patterson of Pennsylvania, and Cadwalader—all of them in this movement to break down and disorganize the Democratic party and the country. Why is it? This Douglas party furnished you one-half of your entire army. Where is your general, where is your man in command to-day who belongs to that party? Why is this? Have you Republicans sympathized with this Breckinridge party? Are you sympathizing with them, and lending your aid to the men who lead our armies into misfortune and disgrace?

Richardson, Speech
in House
of Representatives,
July 24, 1861
"Globe,"
p. 245

Richardson was easily answered. A Member correctly replied that these and other three months' generals had been selected by the Governors of

various States, and not by the President; moreover, that Patterson had been specially recommended by General Scott, whom Richardson was eulogizing, and that there would be plenty of opportunity before the war was over for the Douglas men to win honors in the field. But all this did not soothe Richardson's temper, which was roused mainly by his revived factional jealousy.

Unjust fault-finding was to be expected from party opponents; but it is not too much to say that it was a genuine surprise to the President to receive from a party friend, and the editor of the most influential newspaper in the Union, the following letter, conveying an indirect accusation of criminal indifference, and proposing an immediate surrender to rebellion and consent to permanent disunion:

NEW YORK, Monday, July 29, 1861
Midnight

DEAR SIR. This is my seventh sleepless night—yours, too, doubtless—yet I think I shall not die, because I have no right to die. I must struggle to live, however bitterly. But to business. You are not considered a great man, and I am a hopelessly broken one. You are now undergoing a terrible ordeal, and God has thrown the gravest responsibilities upon you. Do not fear to meet them. Can the rebels be beaten after all that has occurred, and in view of the actual state of feeling caused by our late, awful disaster? If they can,—and it is your business to ascertain and decide,—write me that such is your judgment, so that I may know and do my duty. And if they *cannot* be beaten,—if our recent disaster is fatal,—do not fear to sacrifice yourself to your country. If the rebels are not to be beaten,—if that is your judgment in view of all the light you can get,—then every drop of blood henceforth shed in this quarrel will be wantonly, wickedly shed, and the guilt will rest heavily on the soul of

CHAP XX. every promoter of the crime I pray you to decide quickly and let me know my duty.

If the Union is irrevocably gone, an armistice for thirty, sixty, ninety, one hundred and twenty days — better still for a year — ought at once to be proposed, with a view to a peaceful adjustment. Then Congress should call a National Convention, to meet at the earliest possible day And there should be an immediate and mutual exchange or release of prisoners and a disbandment of forces. I do not consider myself at present a judge of anything but the public sentiment. That seems to me everywhere gathering and deepening against a prosecution of the war The gloom in this city is funereal — for our dead at Bull Run were many, and they lie unburied yet On every brow sits sullen, scorching, black despair It would be easy to have Mr Crittenden move any proposition that ought to be adopted, or to have it come from any proper quarter The first point is to ascertain what is best that can be done,— which is the measure of our duty,—and do that very thing at the earliest moment.

This letter is written in the strictest confidence, and is for your eye alone But you are at liberty to say to members of your Cabinet that you *know* I will second any move you may see fit to make But do nothing timidly nor by halves Send me word what to do I will live till I can hear it at all events If it is best for the country and for mankind that we make peace with the rebels at once and on their own terms, do not shrink even from that But bear in mind the greatest truth: "Whoso would lose his life for my sake shall save it" Do the thing that is the highest right, and tell me how I am to second you

Yours, in the depths of bitterness,

MS

HORACE GREELEY

These few citations are noteworthy, because of the high quarters whence they emanated and the subsequent relations some of their authors bore to the war. They give us penetrating glimpses of how the Bull Run disaster was agitating the public opinion of the North. But it must not be hastily in-

ferred that such was the preponderant feeling. The great tides of patriotism settled quickly back to their usual level. The army, Congress, and the people took up, a shade less buoyantly, but with a deeper energy, the determined prosecution of the war, and continued their confidence in the President, Cabinet, and military authorities. The war Governors tendered more troops and hurried forward their equipped regiments; the Administration pushed the organization of the long-term volunteers; and out of the scattered débris of the Bull Run forces there sprang that magnificent Army of the Potomac, which in a long and fluctuating career won such historic renown.

Meanwhile, in this first shadow of defeat, President Lincoln maintained his wonted equanimity of manner and speech. A calm and resolute patience was his most constant mood; to follow with watchfulness the details of the accumulation of a new army was his most eager occupation. He smiled at frettings like those of Scott, Dix, and Richardson; but letters like that of Greeley made him sigh at the strange weakness of human character. Such things gave him pain, but they bred no resentment, and elicited no reply. Already at this period he began the display of that rare ability in administration which enabled him to smooth mountains of obstacles and bridge rivers of difficulty in his control of men.

From this time onward to the end of the war his touch was daily and hourly amidst the vast machinery of command and coordination in Cabinet, Congress, army, navy, and the hosts of national politics. To still the quarrels of factions, to allay the jeal-

CHAP XX ousies of statesmen, to compose the rivalries of generals, to soothe the vanity of officials, to prompt the laggard, to curb the ardent, to sustain the faltering, was a substratum of daily routine underlying the great events of campaigns, battles, and high questions of state

On the night following the battle of Bull Run, while Lincoln lay awake on a sofa in the Executive office, waiting to gather what personal information he could from the many officers and civilians who were arriving at Washington after their flight from the battlefield, he began sketching a pencil memorandum of the policy and military programme most expedient to be adopted in the new condition of affairs. This sketch or outline he added to from time to time during the succeeding days. On the 23d and 27th days of July he seems to have matured his reflections on the late disaster, and with his own hand he carefully copied his memorandum in this completed form :

JULY 23, 1861.

1. Let the plan for making the blockade effective be pushed forward with all possible dispatch

- 2 Let the volunteer forces at Fort Monroe and vicinity, under General Butler, be constantly drilled, disciplined, and instructed without more for the present

- 3 Let Baltimore be held as now, with a gentle but firm and certain hand

- 4 Let the force now under Patterson or Banks be strengthened and made secure in its position

- 5 Let the forces in Western Virginia act till further orders according to instructions or orders from General McClellan

- 6 General Frémont push forward his organization and operations in the West as rapidly as possible, giving rather special attention to Missouri.



WILLIAM A. RICHARDSON.

7 Let the forces late before Manassas, except the three months' men, be reorganized as rapidly as possible in their camps here and about Arlington. CHAP XX

8 Let the three months' forces who decline to enter the longer service be discharged as rapidly as circumstances will permit.

9. Let the new volunteer forces be brought forward as fast as possible; and especially into the camps on the two sides of the river here.

JULY 27, 1861

When the foregoing shall have been substantially attended to:

1 Let Manassas Junction (or some point on one or other of the railroads near it) and Strasburg be seized, and permanently held, with an open line from Washington to Manassas, and an open line from Harper's Ferry to Strasburg — the military men to find the way of doing these

2 This done, a joint movement from Cairo on Memphis; and from Cincinnati on East Tennessee. MS

CHAPTER XXI

CONGRESS

CHAP XXI

THE Thirty-seventh Congress, chosen at the Presidential election of 1860, met in special session on the 4th of July, 1861, under the call contained in President Lincoln's proclamation of April 15; and the House was organized by the election of Galusha A. Grow of Pennsylvania, as speaker. The Senate had already been organized at the inauguration of Mr. Lincoln, for its customary session to confirm Presidential appointments. By the absence of members of both branches from States in rebellion they were reduced in numbers nearly one-third. A striking simplification of party relations was also manifested. The Thirty-sixth Congress had been divided into four parties or factions. Then Republicans were in a minority; now they had a decided majority in both branches; and the Northern Democrats, instructed by the almost universal war feeling in the free States, joined in all necessary war legislation. The new Congress therefore may be said to have consisted of simply a War and Union party upon principal measures of legislation. Upon subjects connected with slavery this again divided itself into an anti-slavery majority and a conservative minority. The effort

of this minority was not as in former days aggressively to extend the institution, but simply to prevent its being weakened or destroyed in the States. The temper and spirit of discussion were in refreshing contrast to the long factional wrangle which had culminated in war. A few Members yet suggested agencies for compromise; one or two from border slave States indulged in malignant censure of the Administration. However deplorable it was that even a slight leaven of disloyalty or indifference should be found in the American Congress, its evil effects were for the time being completely neutralized by the conspicuous examples of devoted loyalty from the same communities and classes, such as that of Andrew Johnson of Tennessee, in the Senate, and of the venerable John J. Crittenden from Kentucky, in the House, and others prominent in field and council, giving their whole soul and strength to the cause of the Union.

Perhaps the most striking feature of President Lincoln's first message to the new Congress was his simple and direct appeal to the people to defend their Constitution and Government. Only a few paragraphs can here be quoted to indicate its general tenor. Reciting the various stages of the rebellion and the action of the Government in calling out an army to defend the Union, he continued:

It is now recommended that you give the legal means for making this contest a short and decisive one; that you place at the control of the Government, for the work, at least four hundred thousand men, and four hundred millions of dollars That number of men is about one-

CHAP XXI

July 4, 1861.

CHAPTER XXI tenth of those of proper ages within the regions where, apparently, *all* are willing to engage, and the sum is less than a twenty-third part of the money value owned by the men who seem ready to devote the whole. A debt of six hundred millions of dollars *now* is a less sum per head than was the debt of our Revolution when we came out of that struggle; and the money value in the country now bears even a greater proportion to what it was *then* than does the population. Surely each man has as strong a motive now to preserve our liberties as each had then to establish them.

It might seem at first thought to be of little difference whether the present movement at the South be called "secession" or "rebellion." The movers, however, well understand the difference. At the beginning, they knew they could never raise their treason to any respectable magnitude by any name which implies *violation* of law. They knew their people possessed as much of moral sense, as much of devotion to law and order, and as much pride in, and reverence for, the history and Government of their common country as any other civilized and patriotic people. They knew they could make no advancement directly in the teeth of these strong and noble sentiments. Accordingly they commenced by an insidious debauching of the public mind. They invented an ingenious sophism, which, if conceded, was followed by perfectly logical steps, through all the incidents to the complete destruction of the Union. The sophism itself is, that any State of the Union may, *consistently* with the national Constitution, and therefore *lawfully* and *peacefully*, withdraw from the Union, without the consent of the Union, or of any other State. The little disguise, that the supposed right is to be exercised only for just cause, themselves to be the sole judge of its justice, is too thin to merit any notice. With rebellion thus sugar-coated, they have been drugging the public mind of their section for more than thirty years; and until at length they have brought many good men to a willingness to take up arms against the Government the day *after* some assemblage of men have enacted the farcical pretense of taking their State out of the Union, who could have been brought to no such thing the day *before*. .

Much is said about the "sovereignty" of the States, CHAP XXI but the word, even, is not in the national Constitution, nor, as is believed, in any of the State constitutions. What is "sovereignty," in the political sense of the term? Would it be far wrong to define it, "A political community without a political superior"? Tested by this, no one of our States, except Texas, ever was a sovereignty. And even Texas gave up the character on coming into the Union, by which act she acknowledged the Constitution of the United States, and the laws and treaties of the United States made in pursuance of the Constitution, to be, for her, the supreme law of the land. The States have their *status in* the Union, and they have no other legal *status*. If they break from this, they can only do so against law, and by revolution. The Union, and not themselves separately, procured their independence and their liberty. By conquest, or purchase, the Union gave each of them whatever of independence and liberty it has. The Union is older than any of the States, and, in fact, it created them as States. Originally, some dependent colonies made the Union, and, in turn, the Union threw off their old dependence for them, and made them States, such as they are. Not one of them ever had a State constitution independent of the Union. Of course it is not forgotten that all the new States framed their constitutions before they entered the Union; nevertheless, dependent upon, and preparatory to, coming into the Union. Unquestionably the States have the powers and rights reserved to them in and by the national Constitution; but among these, surely, are not included all conceivable powers, however mischievous or destructive, but at most such only as were known in the world at the time as governmental powers; and certainly a power to destroy the Government itself had never been known as a governmental—as a merely administrative—power. This relative matter of national power and State rights, as a principle, is no other than the principle of *generality* and *locality*. Whatever concerns the whole should be confided to the whole—to the General Government; while whatever concerns *only* the State should be left exclusively to the State. This is all there is of original principle about it . . .

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It may well be questioned whether there is, to-day, a majority of the legally qualified voters of any State, except perhaps South Carolina, in favor of disunion. There is much reason to believe that the Union men are the majority in many, if not in every other one, of the so-called seceded States. The contrary has not been demonstrated in any one of them. It is ventured to affirm this, even of Virginia and Tennessee, for the result of an election, held in military camps, where the bayonets are all on one side of the question voted upon, can scarcely be considered as demonstrating popular sentiment. At such an election all that large class who are, at once, *for* the Union, and *against* coercion, would be coerced to vote against the Union.

Our adversaries have adopted some declarations of independence, in which unlike the good old one, penned by Jefferson, they omit the words, "all men are created equal." Why? They have adopted a temporary national constitution, in the preamble of which, unlike our good old one, signed by Washington, they omit, "We, the people," and substitute, "We, the deputies of the sovereign and independent States." Why? Why this deliberate pressing out of view the rights of men and the authority of the people? This is essentially a people's contest. On the side of the Union it is a struggle for maintaining in the world that form and substance of Government whose leading object is to elevate the condition of men, to lift artificial weights from all shoulders; to clear the paths of laudable pursuit for all, to afford all an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life. Yielding to partial and temporary departures, from necessity, this is the leading object of the Government for whose existence we contend. I am most happy to believe that the plain people understand and appreciate this. It is worthy of note, that while in this the Government's hour of trial large numbers of those in the army and navy who have been favored with the offices have resigned, and proved false to the hand which had pampered them, not one common soldier, or common sailor, is known to have deserted his flag.

Our popular government has often been called an experiment. Two points in it our people have already

settled—the successful *establishing* and the successful *administering* of it. One still remains—its successful *maintenance* against a formidable internal attempt to overthrow it. It is now for them to demonstrate to the world, that those who can fairly carry an election can also suppress a rebellion, that ballots are the rightful and peaceful successors of bullets, and that when ballots have fairly and constitutionally decided, there can be no successful appeal back to bullets, that there can be no successful appeal except to ballots themselves at succeeding elections.

As a private citizen, the Executive could not have consented that these institutions shall perish, much less could he, in betrayal of so vast and so sacred a trust as these free people have confided to him. He felt that he had no moral right to shrink, nor even to count the chances of his own life in what might follow. In full view of his great responsibility, he has, so far, done what he has deemed his duty. You will now, according to your own judgment, perform yours.

Message to
Congress,
July 4, 1861.
Appendix,
"Globe,"
pp 2-4

President Lincoln's message was received not only with marks of approbation, but that clause of it which proposed to make the war short and decisive, and to raise an army of four hundred thousand men for the purpose, was greeted with hearty applause by the Members on the floor. In this particular they even exceeded the President's request. The new army bill provided for the enlistment of volunteers for three years, unless sooner discharged, to a number not exceeding five hundred thousand, besides authorizing the increase of the regular army by the addition of eleven new regiments which the Government had already directed. The President was invested with authority to close insurrectionary ports of entry by proclamation, and a substantial *carte-blanche* was given to the Secretary of

CHAP XXI the Navy to make a temporary increase in that branch of the service, by authority to "hire, purchase, or contract" for vessels, and by the enlistment of the necessary seamen for three years, or during the war, to place them in a state of the utmost efficiency. The Secretary of State was allowed a large increase of consular representation at foreign ports. A considerable number of important amendments to existing laws were passed, which the recent conspiracy and insurrection suggested or made necessary. Express authority was given the President to collect duties on shipboard, whenever such collection at ordinary places and by ordinary means should become impracticable. The force bill of 1795, which only provided "for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions," was amended so as to include authority to suppress "rebellion against the authority of the Government of the United States" Conspiracy to overthrow the Government of the United States or levy war against it was defined and made punishable. Important amendments were added to the law punishing piracy, and a new one passed to punish unlawful recruiting. For the purpose of weeding out any lurking sentiment of disaffection, every civil employee of the Government was required to take the oath of allegiance anew.

Appendix,
"Globe,"
July and
Aug., 1861,
- p 23

Ibid., p 31

One of the principal duties of this new Congress was to provide the "sinews of war." The strain to which the public credit had been subjected by the Buchanan Administration had brought it to the verge of ruin. But the installation of a new President, pledged to perpetuate the Government,

maintain the Constitution, and enforce the laws, reassured the commercial as well as the political world. Secretary Chase, to feel the financial pulse, advertised eight millions of the six per cent. bonds authorized by the act of February 8, 1861. The response was highly gratifying. The total offers amounted to twenty-seven millions, at bids ranging from ninety per cent. to par. His immediate predecessor, Secretary Dix, had sold eight millions of the same loan one month before at a little less than ninety and a half. Determined to hold up the public credit to the highest possible point, Chase rejected all bids under ninety-four, awarding (April 2, 1861) a total of \$3,099,000 at an average of ninety-four and a fraction. The loss of the bids slightly under this figure he made up by negotiating, a few days later, \$4,901,000 in Treasury notes at par and a slight premium.

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R A
Bayley,
"National
Loans of
the United
States"
(Tenth Cen-
sus), p 151.
Schuckers,
"Life of S
P Chase,"
p 213

Before his next offer was advertised the political convulsion had come. Sumter had fallen, and the national forces had been called out. With the advent of serious war and the beginning of expenditures apparently without limit there was some danger that the Government finances might collapse. But the national credit was buoyed up by the grand and almost unanimous patriotism of the North. On the 21st of May Secretary Chase awarded another loan of \$7,310,000 six per cent bonds at an average of a fraction above eighty-five, and was at the same time able to negotiate \$1,689,000 Treasury notes at par. From this point he also began that policy of making his financial appeals directly to the public which rendered his administration of the finances famous. Treas-

Bayley,
"National
Loans of
the United
States"
(Tenth Cen-
sus), p 151.

CHAP XXI ury notes were used at par in direct payment of public creditors and of official salaries; and some two and a half millions additional were made available in that form prior to the meeting of Congress. Favorable as the rates were in the unusual contingency, these loans scarcely sufficed for the most pressing needs of the Treasury. It was necessary to call out the resources of the country upon a comprehensive system, and to an amount which, by comparison, dwarfed all previous Government transactions to insignificance.

Schuckers,
"Life of S
P Chase,"
p 213

President Lincoln's message asked that four hundred millions of dollars should be placed at the control of the Government for the suppression of rebellion. Secretary Chase proposed to raise for the first fiscal year eighty millions by taxes and two hundred and forty millions by loans. Congress in response authorized a national loan of two hundred and fifty millions of dollars; levied on the various States and Territories a direct tax of twenty millions; and made provision by an increased tariff and an income tax for the remainder.

While nearly all the Northern Democrats, as well as the Republicans, were earnestly supporting the war measures of the Government, they nevertheless wished to avoid committing themselves to the political doctrines of the Republican party; and the Representatives from the border slave States naturally shared this desire. With this view, several Members of the conservative minority from time to time offered resolutions to define the purpose and objects of the war, and such resolutions were generally framed in phraseology touching the slav-

ery question which was unpalatable to Republicans of extreme antislavery feelings. The Republican majority avoided committal on these propositions by parliamentary delay. But when the battle of Bull Run took place, and the full danger and disgrace of that defeat came to the knowledge of Congress, the spirit of partisanship gave way somewhat to the immediate desire and need of united support to the Administration. In this new hour of trial, by common consent, Mr Crittenden of Kentucky offered a resolution which embodied the controlling thought and purpose of the Administration and the country.

Resolved, etc., That the present deplorable civil war has been forced upon the country by the disunionists of the Southern States, now in arms against the constitutional Government, and in arms around the capital, that in this national emergency Congress, banishing all feelings of mere passion or resentment, will recollect only its duty to the whole country, that this war is not waged on their part in any spirit of oppression, or for any purpose of conquest or subjugation, or purpose of overthrowing or interfering with the rights or established institutions of those States, but to defend and maintain the supremacy of the Constitution, and to preserve the Union with all the dignity, equality, and rights of the several States unimpaired, and that as soon as these objects are accomplished the war ought to cease

"Globe,"
July 22, 1861,
p 222

The resolution was adopted without debate and with but four dissenting votes in the House. The same resolution was two days later offered in the Senate by Andrew Johnson, where it was debated at length, and passed with but five dissenting votes, one of which was upon objections to mere phraseology. The resolution had a most important effect upon public opinion, curbing the excess of radical

July 25, 1861.

CHAP XXI thought in the North, and reconciling the reactionary prejudice of the border slave States to the severe measures and sacrifices which the rebellion and the actual conflict of arms made it impossible longer to postpone.

The agreement upon political theory expressed in this Crittenden resolution was, however, quickly found to be, like all generalities and compromises, difficult of application to practical questions springing up, particularly in military administration. In substance the agreement might be defined to be, that the border States would help prosecute the war, if the war would refrain from touching slavery. But in making this agreement, both parties assumed a certain inconsistency. In the failure to discriminate between the slaves of loyal citizens and the slaves of rebels each side placed itself in a false position. The inevitable need of both was as much to strike at the power which slavery gave the enemy as to protect the rights of loyal slaveholders. The same event which had compelled the union of votes for the Crittenden resolution also compelled the recognition of such a practical discrimination.

On the day following the battle of Bull Run, while the Crittenden resolution was being acted on by the House, the Judiciary Committee of the Senate reported an amendment to a pending bill to confiscate the property of rebels. "The amendment provides," said Senator Trumbull, "that if any person held to service or labor in any State, under the laws thereof (by which, of course, is meant a slave in any of these States), is employed in aid of this rebellion, in digging ditches or intrenchments,

or in any other way, or if used for carrying guns, CHAP XXI
or if used to destroy this Government, by the consent of his master, his master shall forfeit all right to him, and he shall be forever discharged. . . I understand that negroes were in the fight which has recently occurred. I take it that negroes who are used to destroy the Union, and to shoot down the Union men by the consent of traitorous masters, ought not to be restored to them." Nearly every Senator from free States voted for this amendment. Those from the border States of Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri felt compelled to explain that they opposed the secondary and remote consequences of the declaration rather than the direct penalty. The Senators from Delaware did not vote at all, and the bill as amended was at once passed without division.

"Globe,"
July 22, 1861,
pp 218, 219

Substantially the same feeling carried the bill through the House with a slight change of phraseology. Read and referred there, it came up for debate within two weeks after the battle. Many Members took part in the discussion, not in an obstructive spirit, but in the temper of true debate which seeks to influence votes by substantial reasoning. Perhaps no Member was listened to with such attention as Mr. Crittenden. His age, his unshaken loyalty, his position as mediator between the sections, his influence in and for Kentucky as a sort of keystone for compromise, gave his words great weight. But in opposing the measure he could urge nothing against the justice of the penalty; he could only allege that it violated the Constitution, and declare that he believed the policy inexpedient.

CHAPTER XXI To this Thaddeus Stevens, the parliamentary leader of the Republicans, replied:

Sir, these rebels, who have disregarded and set at defiance that instrument, are by every rule of municipal and international law estopped from pleading it against our action. When a country is at open war with an enemy every publicist agrees that you have the right to use every means which will weaken him. I do not believe that the free people of the North will stand by and see their sons and brothers and neighbors slaughtered by thousands and tens of thousands, by rebels, with arms in their hands, and forbear to call upon their enemies to be our friends.

"Globe,"
Aug 2, 1861,
pp 414, 415

There was no need to enforce this sentiment by discussion. Several Senators and Representatives had gone within sight and sound of the Bull Run battlefield on that eventful Sunday; one Representative was at that moment a prisoner of war in Richmond. The bill passed sixty to forty-eight, —one-third of the House not voting,—the conservative nays contributing perhaps as much to its passage by a feeble opposition, as the radical boldness of the yeas, who would not have had the strength to force its adoption against a determined resistance.

Congress also legalized such of President Lincoln's war measures as had been taken without sanction of express law, but there was about the action a certain hesitation which robbed it of the grace of spontaneous generosity and revealed, even at this early day, germs of faction among the supporters of the Administration. On the third day of the session a joint resolution was introduced in the Senate reciting the measures of extraordinary exigency, namely, the first call of the militia; the

blockade; the call for three years' volunteers; the CHAP XXI increase of the regular army and navy, and the suspension of the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus*; and declaring these several acts legal and valid

The resolution met but little direct opposition. Extremists like ex-Vice-President John C. Breckinridge, who had not yet openly joined the rebellion, talked of usurpation; border State conservatives argued that if the President's acts were illegal no power of Congress could validate them. The Republicans chose rather a course of inaction; only a few openly refusing to vote for it, and those assigning different reasons. Some objected to the increase of the regular army, others expressed their conviction that Congress alone possessed authority to suspend the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus*. The strongest underlying motive in both branches, perhaps, was an unwillingness to open a serious discussion which might interfere with the prompt disposal of such legislation as was immediately necessary, and which legislation would create no marked division of sentiment.

In this way the Senate resolution remained among the unfinished business, and the subject was left in abeyance until the prominent war measures were enacted. On the day before adjournment a section was added to a bill for an increase of army pay, which, without making specific recitals, declared "that all the acts, proclamations, and orders of the President" relating to the militia or volunteers "are hereby approved and in all respects legalized and made valid, to the same intent and with the same effect as if they had been issued and done under

CHAP XXI the previous express authority and direction of the Congress of the United States." In this shape the act was passed with but slight opposition, and the special session adjourned on August 6, having in the period of a single month elaborated and passed a large number of very important laws, forming together a comprehensive and reasonably complete system of war legislation.

CHAPTER XXII

THE CONTRABAND

THE first movement of armed forces proved that the slavery question was destined to be as omnipresent in war as it had been in national politics. When, immediately after the Baltimore massacre, General Butler, with his Massachusetts regiment, appeared by sea before Annapolis, one of the first rumors which came to him from shore was that the Maryland slaves were about to take advantage of the public disturbance to rise in insurrection against their masters. Butler, to assure the Marylanders that his mission was friendly and not hostile, thereupon offered the use of his forces to Governor Hicks to quell any such rising. Governor Hicks thanked the general for the tender, but replied that the civil authorities were strong enough to control all danger of that character.

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Butler to
Hicks,
Apl 23, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 593

Hicks to
Butler,
Apl 23, 1861
W R Vol
II, p 594

When the incident came to the knowledge of Governor Andrew of Massachusetts, he wrote a strong disapproval of the general's offer. "I think the matter of servile insurrection among a community in arms against the Federal Union is no longer to be regarded by our troops in a political, but solely in a military point of view; and is to be contemplated as one of the inherent weaknesses of the

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Andrew to
Butler,
Apl 25, 1861
Moore,
"Rebellion
Record,"
Vol I, Doc-
uments,
p 256

Butler to
Andrew,
May 9 1861
Ibid,
pp 257, 258

enemy. . . I can on this occasion perceive no reason of military policy why a force, summoned to the defense of the Federal Government, at this moment of all others, should be offered to be diverted from its immediate duty, to help rebels who stand with arms in their hands, obstructing its progress towards the city of Washington." Butler warmly defended his conduct on the score of humanity; alleging that the cause of the Union would not be advanced by permitting the indiscriminate massacre of defenseless women and children. This humane feeling was the dominant one with the Union commanders. When General McClellan moved his forces from Ohio into West Virginia, and also when General Patterson prepared to advance from Pennsylvania and Maryland against Harper's Ferry, both issued orders specially enjoining their subordinates to suppress all attempts at an insurrection of the slaves.

A new phase of the question, however, soon presented itself. General Butler, as we have seen, was sent to take command of Fort Monroe, and to organize expeditions against the rebel works in his neighborhood. He had as his opponent the energetic General John B. Magruder, who, sparsely supplied with men, sought in multiplied earthworks the best means of defense immediately available. Rebel batteries rose, with astonishing rapidity, at every landing place, point, inlet, and country road, and for the erection of these batteries the negro field-hands from the well-stocked plantations of lower Virginia were employed by him through a rigorous military impressment. The negroes sometimes found, and eagerly embraced, opportuni-

Cosby to
Crump,
July 23, 1861.
W E Vol
II, p 1007

ties to escape to the Union lines under these new conditions. A policy speedily developed itself on the part of their owners to remove not only the laborers, but also the families of the slaves, from the exposed and insecure hostile border to more remote places in the interior. Very soon, therefore, Fort Monroe became to the discontented blacks in the vicinity the center of a vague hope, both of escape from removal to the dreaded far South, and of possible liberation from bondage

General Butler had been in command at his new post but a few days, when a rebel flag of truce applied to him, among other errands, to return three negro field-hands, belonging to a Colonel Mallory. The general found that these three slaves sought refuge in the fort to avoid building batteries in North Carolina. The flag-bearer demanded that they should be restored to their owner, under the injunctions of the fugitive-slave act. General Butler warily responded that since Virginia claimed to be a foreign country the fugitive-slave law could not possibly be in operation there, and declined on that ground. If their master would come to the fort and take the oath of allegiance to the Constitution of the United States, he said he would deliver the men up to him, and endeavor to hire their services of him. The flag-bearer could only answer the home thrust by saying that Colonel Mallory was absent.

Out of this incident seems to have grown one of the most sudden and important revolutions in popular thought which took place during the whole war. General Butler has had the credit of first pronouncing the opinion, or formulating the

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Butler to
Gen Scott,
May 25, 1861
W R Vol
II, pp 649,
650

CH XXII doctrine, that under the principles of international law the negro slaves, whose enforced labor in battery-building was at the moment of supreme military value to the rebels, were manifestly contraband of war, and as such confiscable by military right and usage. There is no word or hint of this theory in his letter which reports the Mallory incident, nor any other official mention of it by him, until two months afterwards, when he stated incidentally that he had adopted such a theory.¹ Nevertheless, it is very possible that the idea may have emanated from him, though not at first in any authentic or official form. It first occurs casually in a newspaper letter from Fort Monroe of the same date with the Mallory incident: "Again, the negro must now be regarded as contraband, since every able-bodied hand, not absolutely required on the plantations, is impressed by the enemy into the military service as a laborer on the various fortifications."

New York
"Tribune,"
May 27, 1861

Whether the suggestion was struck out in Butler's interview with the flag-bearer, or at the general's mess-table in a confidential review of the day's work; or whether it originated with some imaginative member of his staff, or was contributed as a handy expedient by the busy brain of a newspaper reporter, will perhaps forever remain an historical riddle. But public opinion was ripe for this and other steps in political reasoning; and

¹ On the 30th of July, 1861, General Butler wrote to the Secretary of War "When I adopted the theory of treating the able-bodied negro, fit to work in the trenches, as property liable to be used in aid of rebellion, and so contraband of war, that condition of things was in so far met as I then and still believe on a legal and constitutional basis" Butler to Cameron, July 30, 1861 Moore, "Rebellion Record." Vol. II, Documents, p 437.

the thought sprang full statured into popular acceptance. Within a few days, a new phrase was on every one's lips, and the newspapers were full of editorials chuckling over the happy conception of treating fugitive slaves of rebel masters as contraband of war. A few months more of active campaigning materially shortened the formula, and every negro in and about the army became familiarly known and designated as a "contraband." Indeed the word acquired much more than a mere slang value. One would be sadly puzzled to read the literature of the war in detail without knowing that "an intelligent contraband," or "reliable contraband," meant some man, woman, or child of the enslaved race.

The question of colored fugitives, first presented in the Mallory incident, quickly grew to importance. Three days later General Butler reported that slave "property" to the value of sixty thousand dollars was in his hands. Fugitive slaves in squads were flocking into his lines bringing women and children — whole families leaving plantations together to avoid being sent further South. Being greatly in need of laborers he received all who came, issued them clothing and rations, and employed the able-bodied in work.

His course was approved by the Government, and the Secretary of War wrote, under date of May 30:

The Department is sensible of the embarrassments which must surround officers conducting military operations in a State by the laws of which slavery is sanctioned. The Government cannot recognize the rejection by any State of its Federal obligations, nor can it refuse the per-

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Butler to
Gen Scott,
May 27, 1861
W. R. Vol.
II, p 53

CH XXII formance of the Federal obligations resting upon itself. Among these Federal obligations, however, no one can be more important than that of suppressing and dispersing armed combinations formed for the purpose of overthrowing its whole constitutional authority. While, therefore, you will permit no interference by the persons under your command with the relations of persons held to service under the laws of any State, you will, on the other hand, so long as any State within which your military operations are conducted is under the control of such armed combinations, refrain from surrendering to alleged masters any persons who may come within your lines. You will employ such persons in the services to which they may be best adapted, keeping an account of the labor by them performed, of the value of it, and of the expense of their maintenance. The question of their final disposition will be reserved for future determination.

Came on
to Butler,
May 30, 1861
W. R.
Series III,
Vol. I, p.
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The negroes who came into General Butler's lines at Fort Monroe were thus disposed of on a theory and rule with which everybody but the enemy was reasonably satisfied. But the question presented itself in a more embarrassing shape at Washington. Slavery existed in the District of Columbia; and here, directly, as it were, under the President's eye, slaves began to make their way across the Potomac into General McDowell's camps, where they could find plenty of officers willing to afford them a hiding-place in order to secure their help as servants. This could not be justified upon any "contraband" or confiscation theory; and President Lincoln, who had in his inaugural address indicated that his oath bound him to execute the fugitive-slave law, as well as every other law, felt it incumbent on him to order that there should be no indirect violation of existing statutes by the army. Nor could he allow himself

to be placed in an attitude where the Senators and CH XXII
Representatives of Maryland and the other border
slave States he was endeavoring to hold in the
Union might accuse him of bad faith, or of inten-
tionally evading his constitutional obligations. The
following monition, therefore, went from army
headquarters to General McDowell:

The General-in-Chief desires me to communicate to you
that he has received from the President of the United
States a second note, dated to-day, on the subject of fu-
gitive slaves, in which he asks "Would it not be well to
allow owners to bring back those which have crossed"
the Potomac with our troops? The General earnestly in-
vites your attention to this subject, knowing that you,
with himself, enter fully into his Excellency's desire to
carry out to the fullest all constitutional obligations. Of
course it is the General's wish the name of the President
should not at this time be brought before the public in
connection with this delicate subject.

Hamilton
to McDow-
ell, July 16,
1861 W R
Series III,
Vol I, p.
375

At the same time the local commander in Wash-
ington issued his order that, "Fugitive slaves will
under no pretext whatever be permitted to reside,
or be in any way harbored, in the quarters and
camps of the troops serving in this Department.
Neither will such slaves be allowed to accom-
pany troops on the march." This order, if it
did not serve effectually to keep Maryland con-
trabands out of McDowell's lines, at least quieted
the complaints of Maryland Representatives in
Congress.

Talbot,
Orders,
July 17, 1861.
W R
Series III,
Vol I, p.
376

The President, however, did not make his own
local action in Washington a precedent or guide
for commanders in other departments. He had
wisely divined from the beginning that his true
policy lay in making the question in every case a

CH XXII matter of local determination, to be governed by military necessity, and to be devolved upon the responsibility of the local military commander. It is doubtful whether the directions of Mr. Lincoln, above quoted, would have given him long respite between the clamors of pro-slavery Congressmen on one side and antislavery Congressmen on the other, had not the current of actual war served gradually to change and simplify the problem. At the date of issuing these orders the march to Bull Run had begun. The battle and defeat followed a week later; and in the excitement and demoralization of the army, and the rapid drift of public opinion, which immediately ensued, the recovery of an absconding field-hand or house-servant was too trifling a matter to occupy the attention of either Congressmen or President. The passage of the Crittenden resolution, and of the confiscation act by Congress, occurred shortly afterwards, and what was yet more important, the great military disaster had carried public opinion to the point of accepting the subordination of every question and every interest to the single hope, purpose, and object of successfully prosecuting the war and subduing the rebellion.

Still, in one form or another, the negro problem was continually forcing itself upon the attention of the Government. The local orders, excluding slaves from camps about Washington, had come to the knowledge of General Butler at Fort Monroe; and desiring that his own administration should not violate the spirit of superior orders, he applied to the War Department for definite instructions under the new condition of affairs. Since the defeat at

Bull Run several of his regiments had been called away to reenforce Washington, and in contracting his lines he was obliged to abandon the village of Hampton, which, having been previously abandoned by the insurgent Virginians, had become a village of negroes: men who worked in throwing up intrenchments, and women engaged in washing and marketing, all living upon the rations supplied by the fort. As the army retired to the immediate vicinity of Fort Monroe, all these fugitives followed in a mass, and he reported to the War Department:

I have, therefore, now within the peninsula, this side of Hampton Creek, 900 negroes, 300 of whom are able-bodied men, 30 of whom are men substantially past hard labor, 175 women, 225 children under the age of 10 years, and 170 between 10 and 18 years, and many more coming in. The questions which this state of facts presents are very embarrassing. First. What shall be done with them? and second. What is their state and condition? . Are they property? If they were so, they have been left by their masters and owners, deserted, thrown away, abandoned, like the wrecked vessel upon the ocean. . If property, do they not become the property of the salvors? But we, their salvors, do not need and will not hold such property, and will assume no such ownership; has not, therefore, all proprietary relation ceased? Have they not become, thereupon, men, women, and children? . . . Is a slave to be considered fugitive whose master runs away and leaves him? Is it forbidden to the troops to aid or harbor within their lines the negro children who are found therein, or is the soldier, when his march has destroyed their means of subsistence, to allow them to starve because he has driven off the rebel masters? Now, shall the commander of a regiment or battalion sit in judgment upon the question, whether any given black man has fled from his master, or his master fled from him? Indeed, how are the free born to be distinguished?

Butler to
Cameron,
July 30, 1861
Moore,
"Rebellion
Record"
Vol II
Docu-
ments, pp
437, 438.

CH XXII

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Before the War Department answered these inquiries of General Butler, the confiscation act had been passed by Congress, and signed by the President, which forfeited and annulled the property right of owners in slaves whom they required or permitted to be employed in aid of rebellion, or in hostile service against the Government of the United States; the problem had thus been materially reduced. The reply of Secretary Cameron, under date of August 8, 1861, while declaring that, "It is the desire of the President that all existing rights in all the States be fully respected and maintained," laid down in substance the following general principles. 1. In loyal States and Territories claims to fugitives from service must be prosecuted through ordinary judicial proceedings and be respected alike by military and civil authorities. 2. In States wholly or partly in insurrection, where ordinary laws temporarily fail, rights to service, like other rights, must be necessarily subject to military necessity, if not wholly forfeited by treason. 3. The military authorities must obey the confiscation act, and refuse to recognize any claim to service forfeited by treason. 4. In insurrectionary States where laws are suspended, claims to service cannot safely be decided by military authority:

Under these circumstances it seems quite clear that the substantial rights of loyal masters will be best protected by receiving such fugitives, as well as fugitives from disloyal masters, into the service of the United States, and employing them under such organizations and in such occupations as circumstances may suggest or require. . Upon the return of peace, Congress will doubtless properly provide for all the persons thus received

into the service of the Union, and for just compensation to loyal masters

Aside from its mere legal definitions, this letter of instructions after all left military commanders full authority to decide to which class any contraband might belong, and thus invested them with practical authority to manage the whole position, as to each seemed best. While Butler therefore, at Fort Monroe, was virtually freeing colored fugitives, Dix at Baltimore was declaring that, "We have nothing to do with slaves. We are neither negro stealers, nor negro catchers, and that we should send them away if they come to us." Sherman and Buell in Kentucky issued substantially the same orders as Dix, and Halleck in Missouri employed nearly the same language. The undercurrent of practice, however, ran in an opposite direction. The love of novelty, curiosity, restlessness, and the slave's irrepressible longing for liberty were constantly bringing him into the military camps, where the eagerness of officers and privates to use him in service of camp work and drudgery nearly always made him welcome, and gave him protection. Considerations of self-interest were more active than moral theories or legal responsibilities. Officers who were called upon to decide this question of political duty generally solved it by keeping the contrabands and setting them to work as servants, laborers, and teamsters, and the orders of commanders were gradually relaxed to permit this to be done. This field of usefulness enlarged as armies grew and campaigns increased in activity; and especially when the armies penetrated the South, advancing from half-

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Cameron
to Butler,
Aug 8, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, pp
402, 403

Dix to
Cameron,
Aug 8, 1861
Ibid,
p 404

CH XXII loyal to more thoroughly secession communities, all obligations to return fugitives faded out, because the confiscation act of Congress became substantially applicable to the entire population.

At important military posts, where contrabands flocked in, in numbers which outran the needs of local labor, a solution was reached by transferring them to other places. General Wool at Fort Monroe during September received an order to "send to General McClellan at this place [Washington] all negro men capable of performing labor, accompanied by their families. They can be usefully employed on the military works in this vicinity." A little later he was asked to select one thousand active contrabands to accompany a naval expedition to the Southern coast. Under requirements of this character, the employment of fugitives gradually became systemized; and during the months of October and November General Wool adopted formal regulations, prescribing the pay and rations of "colored persons, called contrabands," employed in his department, adding with evident satisfaction to his letter of transmittal, "They are made to support themselves."

Cameron
to Wool,
Sept 20,
1861 W R
Vol IV, p
615

Thomas A
Scott to
Wool, Oct
5, 1861
W R Vol
VI, p 175

Wool to
Lincoln,
Nov 25, 1861
MS

CHAPTER XXIII

FRÉMONT

MISSOURI had been saved from organized rebellion, but the smell and blackness of insurrectionary fire were strong upon her. While Governor Jackson and General Price, flying from the battle of Boonville as fugitives, were momentarily helpless, they nevertheless had reasonable hope of quick support. Military preparation was set in motion by the Governor's proclamation of June 12 and his order dividing the State into nine military districts and issuing commissions to a skeleton army under the provisions of the military bill passed by his rebel Legislature before their expulsion from the capital by Lyon. Thus every one inclined to take up arms against the Union had the plausible excuse of authority and the guidance of a designated commander and rendezvous, and a simultaneous movement toward organization long preconceived immediately began. Missouri is a large State. She had over 68,000 square miles of territory, and a population of over a million souls; a trifling percentage would yield a formidable force. The spirit and impulse of revolution were at fever heat, and all the fire of the Border-Ruffian days smoldered along the frontier. The

CH XXIII

June 17, 1861.

CH XXIII Governor's brigadier-generals designated camps, and the hot-blooded country lads flocked to them, finding a charm of adventure in the very privations they were compelled to undergo. For half a year disloyalty had gone unpunished; the recent reports of march and battle served rather to sharpen their zeal.

Three railroads radiated from St. Louis—one towards the west, with its terminus at Sedalia; one towards the southwest, ending at Rolla; one towards the south, which terminated near Ironton. The first of these reached only about three-fourths, the last two scarcely half-way, across the State. Western Missouri, therefore, seemed beyond any quick reach of a military expedition from St. Louis. General Price, going westward from Boonville, found one of these camps at Lexington; Governor Jackson, proceeding southward, was attended by a little remnant of fugitives from the battle of Boonville. With such following as each could gather both directed their course toward the Arkansas line, collecting adherents as they went. Their pathway was not entirely clear. Before leaving St. Louis, Lyon had sent an expedition numbering about 2500, commanded by Thomas W. Sweeney, a captain of regulars, by rail to Rolla and thence by a week's march to Springfield, from which point he had advanced a part of his force under Colonel Franz Sigel to Carthage, near the extreme southwestern corner of the State. Jackson and Price, having previously united their forces, thus found Sigel directly in their path. As they greatly outnumbered him, by the battle of Carthage, July 5,—
1861. a sharp but decisive engagement,—they drove him

back upon Springfield, and effected a junction with CH XXIII
the rebel force gathered in the northwestern corner of Arkansas, which had already assisted them by demonstrations and by capturing one of Sigel's companies.

Delayed by the need of transportation, Lyon could not start from Boonville on his southwestern march until the 3d of July. The improvised forces of Jackson and Price, moving rapidly, because made up largely of cavalry, or, rather, unorganized horsemen, were far in advance, and had overwhelmed Sigel before Lyon was well on his way. Nevertheless, he pushed ahead with energy, having called to him a detachment of regulars from Fort Leavenworth, and volunteers from Kansas numbering about 2200. These increased his column to about 4600 men. By July 13 he was at Springfield, and with the forces he found there was at the head of an aggregate of between 7000 and 8000 troops. 1861

The Confederate authorities had ambitious plans for the West. They already possessed Arkansas; the Indian Territory was virtually in their grasp; Missouri they looked upon with confident eyes; even the ultimate conquest of Kansas seemed more than a remote possibility. Nor were such plans confined to mere speculation. Major-General Leonidas Polk was stationed at Memphis early in July to command the Mississippi region. The neutrality policy in Kentucky for the moment left the Tennessee contingent idle. Being appealed to by Governor Jackson, Polk made immediate preparations for a campaign in Missouri. On July 23 he reported to the Confederate Government his purpose to send

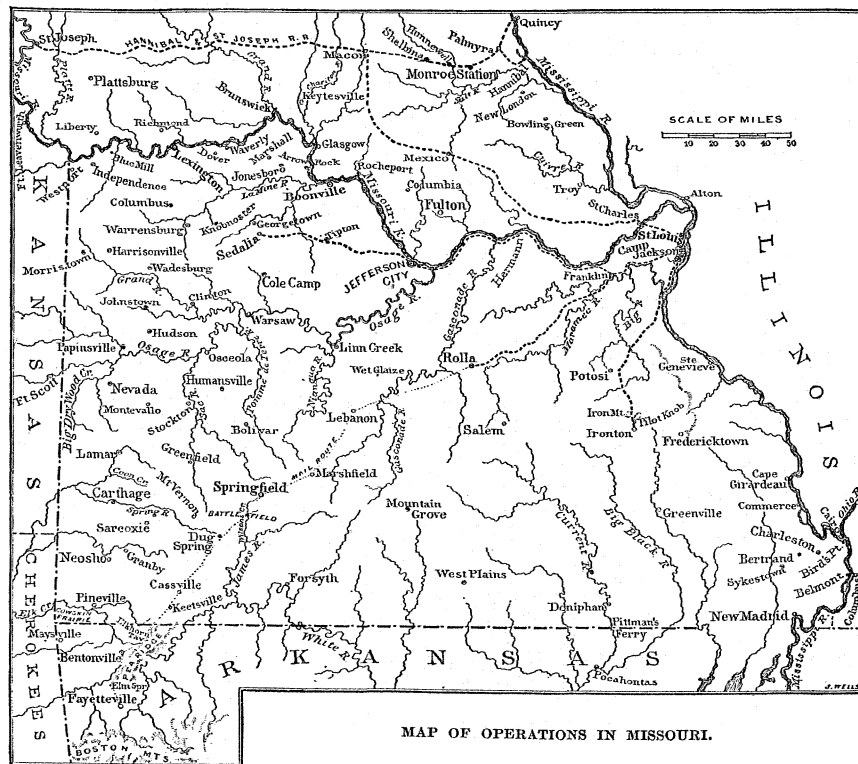
CH XXIII two strong columns into that State—one under General Ben. McCulloch, of about 25,000 men, against Lyon at Springfield; another, under Generals Gideon J. Pillow and William J. Hardee, to march upon Ironton in Southeast Missouri, where he estimated they would collect a force of 18,000. He wrote:

Polk to
Walker,
July 23, 1861
W R Vol
III, p 613

They are directed to pass in behind Lyon's force by land, or to proceed to St. Louis, seize it, and, taking possession of the boats at that point, to proceed up the river Missouri, raising the Missourians as they go, and at such point as may appear most suitable to detach a force to cut off Lyon's return from the West. . . If, as I think, I can drive the enemy from Missouri with the force indicated, I will then enter Illinois and take Cairo in the rear on my return

Ibid,
July 28, 1861
W R Vol
III, p 617

He was obliged a few days later to curtail this extravagant programme. Governor Jackson, he learned, to his chagrin, had exaggerated the available forces fully one-half. Although he had already sent Pillow to New Madrid, he now "paused" in the execution of his plan; and the rivalry of the various rebel commanders seems soon to have completely paralyzed it. The "neutrality" attitude of the Governors of both Missouri and Kentucky greatly delayed the progress of the war in the West. The middle of June came before Lyon chased the rebels from Jefferson City, and in Kentucky open and positive military action was deferred till the first week of September. Meanwhile it was felt that the beginning of serious hostilities was only a question of time. The Mississippi River was blockaded by the rebels, commerce suspended, Cairo garrisoned and fortified by Union forces, gun-boats were being built, regiments were being organized



and sent hither and thither, mainly as yet to keep the neighborhood peace. In the East the several Virginia campaigns were in progress, and General Scott's "anaconda" plan was well understood in confidential circles. CH XXXII

This condition of affairs made the whole Mississippi Valley sensitive and restless. The Governors of the Northwest met, and by memorial and delegation urged the Administration to make the Ohio line secure by moving forward and occupying advanced posts in Kentucky and Tennessee. Especially did they urge the appointment of a competent commander who might organize the immense resources of the West, and make them effective in a grand campaign southward to open the Mississippi.

Almost universal public sentiment turned to John C. Frémont as the desired leader for this duty. He was about forty-eight years of age. As student, as explorer, as a prominent actor in making California a State of the Union, he had shown talent and energy, and conquered success in situations of hazard and peril. As Senator for a brief term, his votes proved that the North could rely on his convictions and principles. As Presidential candidate of the Republican party in 1856, his name had broadened into national representative value. The post of honor then had brought him defeat. He might well claim the post of duty for a chance to win a victory. The dash of romance in his career easily rekindled popular enthusiasm; political sagacity indicated that he should be encouraged to change this popularity into armies, and lead them to military success in aid of the imperiled nation. The inclination of the Administration coincided

CH XXIII with the sentiment of the people Seward had proposed him for Secretary of War, and Lincoln mentioned him for the French mission ; but in the recent distribution of offices no place at once suitable to his abilities and adequate to his claims had been found available. This new crisis seemed to have carved out the work for the man

1861 He had passed the previous winter in France, but upon the outbreak of rebellion returned to his country. On his arrival in the city of New York, about the 1st of July, President Lincoln appointed him a major-general in the regular army, and on the 3d created the Western department, consisting of the State of Illinois and all the States and Territories between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains, and placed it under his command, with headquarters at St. Louis. For a man whose genius could have risen to the requirements of the occasion it was a magnificent opportunity, an imperial theater. Unfortunately, the country and the Administration had overrated Frémont's abilities. Instead of proceeding at once to his post of duty, he remained in New York, absorbed largely in his personal affairs. Two weeks passed before he sent his letter of acceptance and oath of office. "Please proceed to your command without coming here," telegraphed General Scott, two days later. Postmaster-General Blair testified :

Townsend
to Frémont,
July 18, 1861
W R
Vol III,
p 399

As soon as he was appointed, I urged him to go to his department. . . The President questioned me every day about his movements I told him so often that Frémont was off, or was going next day, according to my information, that I felt mortified when allusion was made to it, and dreaded a reference to the subject. Finally, on the receipt of a dispatch from Lyon by my brother, ae-

scribing the condition of his command, I felt justified in telegraphing General Frémont that he must go at once. But he remained till after Bull Run; and even then, when he should have known the inspiration that would give the rebels, he traveled leisurely to St. Louis.

CH XXIII.

BLAIR,
Testimony,
Report of
the Com-
mittee on
Conduct of
the War

1861.

When, on July 25, he reached his headquarters, and formally assumed command, he did not find his new charge a bed of roses. The splendid military strength of the Northwest was only beginning to be developed. Recruiting offices were full; but commanders of departments and Governors of States quarreled over the dribblets of arms and equipments remaining in the arsenals, and which were needed in a dozen places at once. The educated and experienced officers and subalterns of the old regular army, familiar with organization and routine, did not suffice to furnish the needed brigadier-generals and colonels, much less adjutants, commissaries, quartermasters, and drill-sergeants. Error, extravagance, delay, and waste ensued. Regiments were rushed off to the front without uniforms, arms, or rations; sometimes without being mustered into service. Yet the latent resources were abundant in quantity and excellent in quality, and especially in the qualities of mind, ambition, earnestness, and talent competent through practical service to rise to every requirement of duty and sacrifice—genius which could lead, and patriotic devotion ready to serve, suffer, and die. What magnificent capabilities in those early Western volunteers; what illustrious talent in those first regiments found by Frémont and coming at his call!—Lyon, Grant, Blair, McClelland, Pope, Logan, Schofield, Curtis, Sturgis, Palmer,

CH XXIII Hurlbut, and a hundred others whose names shine on the records of war, to say nothing of the thousands who, unheralded, went gloriously to manful duty and patriotic death.

The three weeks loitered away in New York already served to quadruple Frémont's immediate task. Lyon had taken the field, and Blair had gone to Washington to take his seat in the special session of Congress as a Representative. The whole service immediately felt the absence from headquarters of these two inspiring and guiding leaders. At three points in Frémont's new department matters wore a threatening aspect. Following the battle of Boonville there broke out in many parts of the State a destructive guerrilla warfare, degenerating into neighborhood and family feuds and bloody personal reprisal and revenge, which became known under the term of "bushwhacking." Houses and bridges were burned, farms were plundered, railroads were obstructed and broken, men were kidnaped and assassinated. During the whole period of the war few organized campaigns disturbed the large territory of the State; but disorder, lawlessness, crime, and almost anarchy were with difficulty repressed from beginning to end. The local administration charged with the eradication of these evils was greatly embarrassed and often thwarted through the unfortunate jealousy and rivalry between the factions of radicals and conservatives, both adherents of the Union. Equally loyal, equally sincere in their devotion to the Government, they paralyzed each other's efforts by a blind opposition and recrimination. As events progressed these factions increased in their

animosity towards each other and their antagonistic attitude was continued throughout the whole war period. This conflict of public sentiment—personal, political, and military—produced no end of complications requiring the repeated direct interference of President Lincoln, and taxed to the utmost his abounding forbearance. Neighborhood troubles were growing in northern Missouri before Frémont left New York; and Lyon's adjutant selected Brigadier-General John Pope to take command there and restore order. Frémont gave the permission by telegraph; and when he reached St. Louis General Pope had eight Illinois regiments employed in this duty.¹

Frémont's second point of difficulty was the strong report of danger to Cairo. The rebel General Polk, at Memphis, was in the midst of preparations for his Missouri campaign, already mentioned. About the time of Frémont's arrival Pillow had just moved six thousand Tennesseans to New Madrid, and reported his whole force "full of enthusiasm and eager for the 'Dutch hunt.'" News of this movement, and the brood of wild rumors which it

Pillow to
Polk, July
28, 1861
W R Vol
III, p 619

¹ General Pope, under date of August 3, gave a graphic description of the proceedings and methods of the bushwhackers "The only persons in arms, so far as I could learn, were a few reckless and violent men, in parties of twenty or thirty, who were wandering about committing depredations upon all whose sentiments were displeasing, and keeping this whole region in apprehension and uneasiness. So soon as these marauders found that troops were approaching,

which they easily did, from the very persons who ask for protection, they dispersed, each man going to his home, and, in many cases, that home in the very town occupied by the troops. When troops were sent out against these marauders, they found only men quietly working in the field or sitting in their offices, who, as soon as the backs of the Federal soldiers were turned, were again in arms and menacing the peace"—Pope to Sturgeon, Aug 3, 1861. W R Vol. III, p 423

CH XXIII engendered, made General Benjamin M. Prentiss, the Union commander at Cairo, exceedingly uneasy, and he called urgently for assistance. Cairo, the strategic key of the whole Mississippi Valley, was too important to be for a moment neglected; and in a few days after his arrival Frémont gathered the nearest available reinforcements, about eight regiments in all, and, loading them on a fleet of steamboats, led them in person in a somewhat ostentatious expedition to Cairo; and the demonstration, greatly magnified by rumor, doubtless had much influence in checking the hopes of the rebel commanders for an early capture of Missouri and Illinois.

The reenforcement of Cairo was very proper as a measure of precaution. It turned out, however, that the need was less urgent than Frémont's third point of trouble, namely, the safety of Lyon at Springfield, in southwestern Missouri. When Lyon left St. Louis he had conceived this campaign to the southwest, not merely to control that part of the State and to protect it against invasion, but also with the ultimate hope of extending his march into Arkansas. For this he knew his force in hand was inadequate; but he believed that from the troops being rapidly organized in the contiguous free States he would receive the necessary help as soon as it was needed. We have seen that he reached Springfield with an aggregate of about 7000 or 8000 men. It was, for those early days, a substantial, compact little army, well commanded, self-reliant, and enthusiastic. Unfortunately also, like the armies at every other point, it was under the strain and discouragement of partial

Lyon to
Townsend,
July 17,
1861 W. R.
Vol III.,
p 397

dissolution. The term of enlistment of the three months' militia regiments, raised under the President's first proclamation, was about to expire. In every detachment and army, and at every post, throughout the whole country, there occurred about the middle of July, 1861, the incident of a rapid succession of companies and regiments going out of the service. Many of these corps immediately reorganized under the three years' call; many remained temporarily in the field to take part in some impending battle. But despite such instances of generous patriotism, there was at all points a shrinkage of numbers, an interval of disorganization, a paralysis of action and movement.

On the whole, therefore, Lyon found his new position at Springfield discouraging. He was 120 miles from a railroad; provisions and supplies had not arrived as expected; half his army would within a brief period be mustered out of service; McClellan¹ was in Western Virginia, Frémont in New York, Frank P. Blair, Jr., in Washington. He scarcely knew who commanded, or where to turn. The rebels were in formidable force just beyond the Arkansas line. The dispatches at this juncture take on an almost despairing tone: "All idea of any further advance movement, or of even maintaining our present position, must soon be abandoned, unless the Government furnishes us promptly with large reinforcements and supplies.

¹ While McClellan was yet at Cincinnati, organizing the Ohio contingent of three months' men, Missouri had been temporarily attached to his department. Beyond a few suggestions by tele-

graph, however, he did not give it any attention in detail, because his hands were already full of work. His Virginia campaign soon required his presence and entire time.

CH XXIII
Schofield to
Haiding,
July 15, 1861
W R Vol
III, p 395

Lyon to
Haiding,
July 17, 1861
W R Vol
III, p 397

1861

Our troops are badly clothed, poorly fed, and imperfectly supplied with tents. None of them have as yet been paid" Two days later Lyon wrote: "If it is the intention to give up the West, let it be so; it can only be the victim of imbecility or malice. Scott will cripple us if he can. Cannot you stir up this matter and secure us relief? See Frémont, if he has arrived. The want of supplies has crippled me so that I cannot move, and I do not know when I can. Everything seems to combine against me at this point. Stir up Blair."

Lyon's innuendoes against the Administration and against General Scott were alike unjust. Both were eager to aid him, but there was here, as elsewhere, a limit to possibilities. It was Frémont who needed stirring up. Appointed by the President on July 1, he had not even sent his official acceptance till the 16th, the day before Lyon wrote this appeal; and, in spite of emphatic urging by Postmaster-General Blair, it was the 25th before he entered on his duties at St. Louis. Three special messengers from Lyon awaited him on his arrival, and repeated the tale of need and of danger. But Frémont responded feebly. Urgent calls indeed came to him from other quarters. As already stated, Cairo was represented to be seriously threatened, and he had chosen first to insure its safety. He had the means, by a judicious rearrangement of his forces, to have aided effectually both these exposed points. Under the critical conditions fully pointed out to him, he could at least have recalled Lyon and assisted his safe withdrawal to his railroad base at Rolla. But he neither recalled him nor substantially

reenforced him. Two regiments were set in motion CH XXIII towards him, but it proved the merest feint of help. No supplies and no troops reached Lyon in season to be of the slightest service. His danger lay in a junction of the various rebel leaders just beyond the Arkansas line. The Confederate Government had sent Brigadier-General McCulloch to conciliate or conquer the Indian Territory as events might dictate, and had given him three regiments — one from Louisiana, one from Texas, and one from Arkansas — for the work. Finding it bad policy for the present to occupy the Indian Territory, he hovered about the border with permission to move into either Kansas or Missouri.

Even before Polk's ambitious programme was found to be impracticable, McCulloch made haste to organize a campaign on his own account. On July 30 he reported that he was on his way towards Springfield with his own brigade of 3200 troops, the command of General N. B. Pearce, with 2500 Arkansas State troops, and the heterogeneous gathering of Missourians under General Sterling Price, which he thought could furnish about 7000 effective men, generally well mounted, but badly commanded, and armed only with common rifles and shotguns. It was the approach of this large force which had given Lyon such uneasiness, and with good cause. Moving steadily upon him, they soon approached so near that his position became critical. His own command had dwindled to less than five thousand effective men; the combined enemy had nearly treble that number of effectives, and probably more than three to one, counting the whole mass. If he remained stationary, they would

McCulloch
to Walker,
July 30,
1861 W. R.
Vol III,
p 622.

CH XXIII slowly envelop and capture him. If he attempted to retreat through the 120 miles of barren mountainous country which lay between him and Rolla, they would follow and harass him and turn his retreat into a rout. Counting to the last upon reenforcements which did not come, he had allowed events to place him in an untenable position.

1861 As a final and desperate resource, and the only one to save his army, he resolved to attack and cripple the enemy. As at Bull Run, and as so often happens, each army, on the evening of August 9, was under orders to advance that night and attack the other. Showers of rain in the evening caused McCulloch temporarily to suspend his order; but Lyon's little army, moving at night-fall, marched ten miles south of Springfield to Wilson's Creek. At midnight they halted for a brief bivouac. Dividing into two columns they fell upon the enemy's camp at daylight, Sigel, with 1200 men and a battery, marching against their right flank, in an endeavor to get to the rear, while Lyon in person led the remaining 3700 men, with two batteries, to a front attack against their left center. The movement was a most daring one, and the conflict soon became desperate. Sigel's attack, successful at first, was checked, his detachment put to flight, and five of his six guns captured and turned against Lyon.

Lyon, on the contrary, by an impetuous advance, not only quickly drove the enemy out of their camp, but gained and occupied a strong natural position which he held with brave determination. His mixed force of regulars and volunteers fought with admirable coopération. McCulloch, confident

in his overwhelming numbers, sent forward line after line of attack, which Lyon's well-posted regular batteries threw back. About the middle of the forenoon an unusually heavy assault from the enemy was thus repulsed, largely by help of the inspiring personal example of Lyon, who led some fragments of reserves in a bayonet charge, but who fell, pierced by a ball, and almost immediately expired. It was his fourth wound received in the action. The command devolved upon Samuel D. Sturgis, a major of regulars, commanding a brigade, and the battle continued until about noon, though no new movements were made. The rebels at length retired, but it was deemed too hazardous to attempt to hold the field, and a retreat to Springfield was agreed upon by a council of officers. An unmolested withdrawal was effected in the afternoon, and upon further consultation a definite retreat upon Rolla was begun the following day. As Lyon had anticipated, the enemy was too much crippled to follow. The Union forces had 223 killed, 721 wounded, and 291 missing. The Confederate loss was 265 killed, 800 wounded, and 30 missing.

W R Vol
III, pp 72,
106

The battle of Wilson's Creek, the death of Lyon, and the retreat of the army to Rolla turned public attention and criticism sharply upon Frémont's department and administration, and that commander was suddenly awakened to his work and responsibility. He now made haste to dispatch reinforcements to Rolla, and sent urgent telegrams for help to Washington and to the Governors of the neighboring free States. He declared martial law in the city of St. Louis, and began an extensive system

Aug 10, 1861

CH XXIII of fortifications; which, together with directions to fortify Rolla, Jefferson City, and several other places, pointed so much to inaction, and a defensive policy, as to increase rather than allay public murmur. Grave dissatisfaction arose from his defects of administration. Instead of bringing order into the chaotic condition of military business, he was prone to set method and routine at defiance, issuing commissions and directing the giving out of contracts in so irregular a way as to bring a protest from the proper accounting officers of the Government. Though specially requested by the President to cooperate with the provisional Governor, he continued to ignore him. A storm of complaint soon arose from all except the little knot of flatterers who abused his favor and the newspapers that were thriving on his patronage. The Unionists of Missouri became afraid that he was neglecting the present safety of the State for the future success of his intended Mississippi expedition, and wild rumors even floated in the air of a secret purpose to imitate the scheme of Aaron Burr and set up an independent dictatorship in the West.

Meigs,
Diary
Sept 18,
1861 MS

Reports came to President Lincoln from multiplied sources, bringing him a flood of embarrassment from the man to whom he had looked with such confidence for administrative aid and military success. It was his uniform habit, when he had once confided command and responsibility to an individual, to sustain him in the trust to the last possible degree. While he heard with pain the cumulating evidence of Frémont's unfitness, instead of immediately removing him from command, he sought rather to remedy the defect. In this spirit

he wrote the following letter to General David CH XXIII
Hunter, which letter peculiarly illustrates his delicacy in managing the susceptibilities of men:

MY DEAR SIR General Frémont needs assistance which it is difficult to give him. He is losing the confidence of men near him, whose support any man in his position must have to be successful. His cardinal mistake is that he isolates himself, and allows nobody to see him; and by which he does not know what is going on in the very matter he is dealing with. He needs to have by his side a man of large experience. Will you not, for me, take that place? Your rank is one grade too high to be ordered to it, but will you not serve the country and oblige me by taking it voluntarily?

Lincoln to
Hunter,
Sept 9, 1861
MS

With this letter of the President, Postmaster-General Blair — hitherto Frémont's warm personal friend — and Montgomery C. Meigs, the Quartermaster-General of the Army, went to St. Louis, to make a brief inspection and report on matters, and to give friendly advice and admonition to the commander of the Department of the West. While they were on their way, Mrs. Frémont was journeying towards Washington, bearing her husband's reply to a letter from the President sent him by special messenger about a week before. Her mind was less occupied with the subject of the misdeed she bore than with a recent quarrel which the general had imprudently allowed to grow up between Colonel Blair and himself. Blair had finally become convinced of Frémont's incapacity, and in public print sharply criticised his doings. Indeed, the quarrel soon progressed so far that Frémont placed him under arrest; then Blair preferred formal charges against the general for maladministration, and the general in

CH XXIII turn entered formal counter-charges against Blair. Arrived at her destination, Mrs. Frémont took the opportunity, in her interview with Mr. Lincoln, to justify General Frémont in all he had done, and to denounce his accusers with impetuous earnestness. She even asked for copies of confidential letters about her husband's personal embroilment. In these circumstances it was no light task for Mr. Lincoln to be at once patient, polite, and just; yet the following letter will testify that he accomplished even this difficult feat:

WASHINGTON, D C, Sept 12, 1861.

MRS GENERAL FRÉMONT

MY DEAR MADAM Your two notes of to-day are before me I answered the letter you bore me from General Frémont, on yesterday, and not hearing from you during the day, I sent the answer to him by mail It is not exactly correct, as you say you were told by the elder Mr Blair, to say that I sent Postmaster-General Blair to St Louis to examine into that Department and report. Postmaster-General Blair did go, with my approbation, to see and converse with General Frémont as a friend I do not feel authorized to furnish you with copies of letters in my possession, without the consent of the writers. No impression has been made on my mind against the honor or integrity of General Frémont, and I now enter my protest against being understood as acting in any hostility towards him

MS

Your obedient servant,

A LINCOLN

It will be interesting to read in addition a graphic verbal recapitulation of these incidents, made by President Lincoln in a confidential evening conversation with a few friends in the Executive office a little more than two years afterward, and which one of his secretaries recorded:

The Blairs have to an unusual degree the spirit of clan. Their family is a close corporation Frank is their hope

and pride. They have a way of going with a rush for CH XXIII anything they undertake, especially have Montgomery and the old gentleman. When this war first began they could think of nothing but Frémont; they expected everything from him, and upon their earnest solicitation he was made a general and sent to Missouri. I thought well of Frémont. Even now I think well of his impulses. I only think he is the prey of wicked and designing men, and I think he has absolutely no military capacity. He went to Missouri the pet and protégé of the Blairs. At first they corresponded with him and with Frank, who was with him, fully and confidentially, thinking his plans and his efforts would accomplish great things for the country. At last the tone of Frank's letters changed. It was a change from confidence to doubt and uncertainty. They were pervaded with a tone of sincere sorrow and of fear that Frémont would fail. Montgomery showed them to me, and we were both grieved at the prospect. Soon came the news that Frémont had issued his emancipation order, and had set up a bureau of abolition, giving free papers, and occupying his time apparently with little else. At last, at my suggestion, Montgomery Blair went to Missouri to look at and talk over matters. He went as the friend of Frémont. He passed, on the way, Mrs Frémont, coming to see me. She sought an audience with me at midnight, and taxed me so violently with many things that I had to exercise all the awkward tact I have to avoid quarreling with her. She surprised me by asking why their enemy, Montgomery Blair, had been sent to Missouri. She more than once intimated that if J H,
Diary MS General Frémont should decide to try conclusions with me, he could set up for himself.

CHAPTER XXIV

MILITARY EMANCIPATION

CH XXIV

1861

NOT only President Lincoln, but the country at large as well, was surprised to find, in the newspapers of August 30, a proclamation from the commander of the Department of the West of startling significance. The explanations of its necessity and purpose were altogether contradictory, and its mandatory orders were so vaguely framed as to admit of dangerous variance in interpretation and enforcement. Reciting the disturbed condition of society, and defining the boundaries of army occupation, it contained the following important decrees:

Circumstances, in my judgment of sufficient urgency, render it necessary that the commanding general of this department should assume the administrative powers of the State . In order, therefore, to suppress disorder, to maintain as far as now practicable the public peace, and to give security and protection to the persons and property of loyal citizens, I do hereby extend and declare established martial law throughout the State of Missouri . . All persons who shall be taken with arms in their hands within these lines shall be tried by court-martial, and if found guilty will be shot The property, real and personal, of all persons in the State of Missouri who shall take up arms against the United States, or who shall be directly proven to have taken an active part with their enemies in the field, is declared to be confiscated to the



GENERAL JOHN C. FRÉMONT.

public use, and their slaves, if any they have, are hereby declared freemen. The object of this declaration is to place in the hands of the military authorities the power to give instantaneous effect to existing laws, and to supply such deficiencies as the conditions of war demand. But this is not intended to suspend the ordinary tribunals of the country, where the law will be administered by the civil officers in the usual manner, and with their customary authority, while the same can be peaceably exercised.

CH XXIV
Frémont,
Proclama-
tion, Aug
30, 1861
W R Vol
III, pp 466,
467

Despite its verbiage and confusion of subjects, it was apparent that this extraordinary document was not a measure of military protection, but a political manoeuvre. Since the first movement of the armies the slavery question had become a subject of new and vital contention, and the antislavery drift of public opinion throughout the North was unmistakably manifest. There was no room for doubt that General Frémont, apprehensive about his loss of prestige through the disaster to Lyon and the public clamors growing out of his mistakes in administration, had made this appeal to the latent feeling in the public mind as a means of regaining his waning popularity. Full confirmation was afforded by his immediately convening under his proclamation a military commission to hear evidence, and beginning to issue personal deeds of manumission to slaves. The proceeding strongly illustrates his want of practical sense; the delay and uncertainty of enforcement under this clumsy method would have rendered the theoretical boon of freedom held out to slaves rare and precarious, if not absolutely impracticable. As soon as an authentic text of the proclamation reached President Lincoln, he wrote and dispatched

Moore,
"Rebellion
Record"
Vol III.,
Docu-
ments,
pp 129, 130

CH XXIV the following letter by special messenger to the general at St. Louis:

WASHINGTON, D C, Sept 2, 1861

MAJOR-GENERAL FREMONT

MY DEAR SIR Two points in your proclamation of August 30 give me some anxiety

First. Should you shoot a man, according to the proclamation, the Confederates would very certainly shoot our best men in their hands in retaliation, and so, man for man, indefinitely It is, therefore, my order that you allow no man to be shot under the proclamation without first having my approbation or consent

Second I think there is great danger that the closing paragraph, in relation to the confiscation of property and the liberating slaves of traitorous owners, will alarm our Southern Union friends and turn them against us; perhaps run our rather fair prospect for Kentucky Allow me, therefore, to ask that you will, as of your own motion, modify that paragraph so as to conform to the first and fourth sections of the act of Congress entitled, "An act to confiscate property used for insurrectionary purposes," approved August 6, 1861, and a copy of which act I herewith send you.

This letter is written in a spirit of caution, and not of censure I send it by special messenger, in order that it may certainly and speedily reach you

Yours very truly,

A. LINCOLN.

It was the reply to the above which the general sent to Washington by the hand of Mrs. Frémont, and which contained a very lame apology for the dictatorial and precipitate step he had taken. He wrote:

Trusting to have your confidence, I have been leaving it to events themselves to show you whether or not I was shaping affairs here according to your ideas. The shortest communication between Washington and St. Louis generally involves two days, and the employment of two days in time of war goes largely towards success or dis-

aster I therefore went along according to my own judgment, leaving the result of my movements to justify me with you. And so in regard to my proclamation of the 30th. Between the rebel armies, the Provisional Government, and home traitors, I felt the position bad and saw danger. In the night I decided upon the proclamation and the form of it. I wrote it the next morning and printed it the same day. I did it without consultation or advice with any one, acting solely with my best judgment to serve the country and yourself, and perfectly willing to receive the amount of censure which should be thought due if I had made a false movement. This is as much a movement in the war as a battle, and in going into these I shall have to act according to my judgment of the ground before me, as I did on this occasion. If, upon reflection, your better judgment still decides that I am wrong in the article respecting the liberation of slaves, I have to ask that you will openly direct me to make the correction. The implied censure will be received as a soldier always should the reprimand of his chief. If I were to retract of my own accord, it would imply that I myself thought it wrong, and that I had acted without the reflection which the gravity of the point demanded. But I did not. I acted with full deliberation, and upon the certain conviction that it was a measure right and necessary, and I think so still. In regard to the other point of the proclamation to which you refer, I desire to say that I do not think the enemy can either misconstrue or urge anything against it, or undertake to make unusual retaliation. The shooting of men who shall rise in arms against an army in the military occupation of a country is merely a necessary measure of defense, and entirely according to the usages of civilized warfare. The article does not at all refer to prisoners of war, and certainly our enemies have no ground for requiring that we should waive in their benefit any of the ordinary advantages which the usages of war allow to us.

Frémont to
Lincoln,
Sept 8, 1861
W. R. Vol
III, pp 477,
478

Frémont thus chose deliberately to assume a position of political hostility to the President.

CH XXIV Nevertheless Mr. Lincoln, acting still in his unfailing spirit of dispassionate fairness and courtesy, answered as follows :

SIR Yours of the 8th in answer to mine of the 2d instant is just received Assuming that you, upon the ground, could better judge of the necessities of your position than I could at this distance, on seeing your proclamation of August 30 I perceived no general objection to it. The particular clause, however, in relation to the confiscation of property and the liberation of slaves appeared to me to be objectionable in its non-conformity to the act of Congress passed the 6th of last August upon the same subjects; and hence I wrote you, expressing my wish that that clause should be modified accordingly Your answer, just received, expresses the preference on your part that I should make an open order for the modification, which I very cheerfully do It is therefore ordered that the said clause of said proclamation be so modified, held, and construed as to conform to, and not to transcend, the provisions on the same subject contained in the act of Congress entitled, "An act to confiscate property used for insurrectionary purposes," approved August 6, 1861, and that said act be published at length, with this order.

Lincoln to
Frémont,
Sept 11,
1861 W R
Vol III,
pp 485, 486

As might have been expected, Frémont's proclamation of military emancipation, and Lincoln's order revoking it, produced an acrimonious discussion of the slavery question. The incident made the name of Frémont a rallying cry for men holding extreme antislavery opinions, and to a certain extent raised him to the position of a new party leader. The vital relation of slavery to the rebellion was making itself felt to a degree which the great body of the people, so long trained to a legal tolerance of the evil, could not yet bring themselves to acknowledge. Men hitherto conservative and prudent were swept along by the

relentless logic of the nation's calamity to a point CH XXIV where they were ready at once to accept and defend measures of even the last necessity for the nation's preservation. With admirable prudence Lincoln himself added nothing to the public discussion, but a confidential letter written to a conservative friend who approved and defended Frémont's action will be found of enduring interest.

[Private and Confidential]

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, Sept 22, 1861.

HON O H BROWNING

MY DEAR SIR · Yours of the 17th is just received; and coming from you, I confess it astonishes me That you should object to my adhering to a law, which you had assisted in making, and presenting to me, less than a month before, is odd enough But this is a very small part General Frémont's proclamation, as to confiscation of property, and the liberation of slaves, is *purely political* and not within the range of *military* law or necessity If a commanding general finds a necessity to seize the farm of a private owner, for a pasture, an encampment, or a fortification, he has the right to do so, and to so hold it, as long as the necessity lasts; and this is within military law, because within military necessity. But to say the farm shall no longer belong to the owner, or his heirs forever, and this, as well when the farm is *not* needed for military purposes as when it is, is purely political, without the savor of military law about it And the same is true of slaves If the general needs them he can seize them and use them, but when the need is past, it is not for him to fix their permanent future condition. That must be settled according to laws made by lawmakers, and not by military proclamations The proclamation in the point in question is simply "dictatorship." It assumes that the general may do *anything* he pleases—confiscate the lands and free the slaves of *loyal* people, as well as of disloyal ones. And going the whole figure, I have no doubt,

CH XXIV would be more popular, with some thoughtless people, than that which has been done' But I cannot assume this reckless position, nor allow others to assume it on my responsibility

You speak of it as being the only means of saving the Government On the contrary, it is itself the surrender of the Government Can it be pretended that it is any longer the Government of the United States—any government of constitution and laws—wherein a general or a president may make permanent rules of property by proclamation? I do not say Congress might not, with propriety, pass a law on the point, just such as General Frémont proclaimed. I do not say I might not, as a member of Congress, vote for it. What I object to is, that I, as President, shall expressly or impliedly seize and exercise the permanent legislative functions of the Government.

So much as to principle Now as to policy. No doubt the thing was popular in some quarters, and would have been more so if it had been a general declaration of emancipation. The Kentucky Legislature would not budge till that proclamation was modified, and General Anderson telegraphed me that on the news of General Frémont having actually issued deeds of manumission, a whole company of our volunteers threw down their arms and disbanded I was so assured as to think it probable that the very arms we had furnished Kentucky would be turned against us I think to lose Kentucky is nearly the same as to lose the whole game Kentucky gone, we cannot hold Missouri, nor, as I think, Maryland These all against us, and the job on our hands is too large for us We would as well consent to separation at once, including the surrender of this capital. On the contrary, if you will give up your restlessness for new positions, and back me manfully on the grounds upon which you and other kind friends gave me the election, and have approved in my public documents, we shall go through triumphantly You must not understand I took my course on the proclamation *because* of Kentucky. I took the same ground in a private letter to General Frémont before I heard from Kentucky

You think I am inconsistent because I did not also forbid General Frémont to shoot men under the proc-

lamation I understand that part to be within military law, but I also think, and so privately wrote General Frémont, that it is impolitic in this, that our adversaries have the power, and will certainly exercise it, to shoot as many of our men as we shoot of theirs. I did not say this in the public letter, because it is a subject I prefer not to discuss in the hearing of our enemies.

There has been no thought of removing General Frémont on any ground connected with his proclamation, and if there has been any wish for his removal on any ground, our mutual friend Sam Glover can probably tell you what it was. I hope no real necessity for it exists on any ground.

Your friend, as ever,

A. LINCOLN

MS. Also printed in the "Proceedings of the Illinois Bar Association, 1882," pp. 40, 41.

The reader will not fail to note that the argument of this letter seems diametrically opposed to the action of the President, when, exactly one year later, he issued his preliminary Proclamation of Emancipation, as well as to that of the final one,* on the first day of January, 1863. Did Mr. Lincoln change his mind in the interim? The answer is twofold: he did not change his mind as to the principle; he did change his mind as to the policy of the case.

Rightly to interpret Mr. Lincoln's language we must imagine ourselves in his position, and examine the question as it presented itself to his mind. Congress, by the act of August 6, 1861, had authorized him to cause property used or employed in aid of insurrection to be "seized, confiscated, and condemned"; providing, however, that such condemnation should be by judicial proceeding. He saw that Frémont by mere proclamation assumed to confiscate all property, both real and personal, of rebels in arms, whether such property had been put to insurrectionary use or not, and, going a step fur-

CH XXIV ther, had annexed a rule of property, by decreeing that their slaves should become free. This assumption of authority Lincoln rightly defined as "simply dictatorship," and as being, if permitted, the end of constitutional government. The case is still stronger when we remember that Frémont's proclamation began by broadly assuming "the administrative powers of the State"; that its declared object was mere individual punishment, and the measure a local police regulation to suppress disorder and maintain the peace; also that it was to operate throughout Missouri, as well within as without the portions of the State under his immediate military control. Military necessity, therefore, could not be urged in justification. The act was purely administrative and political.

The difference between these extra-military decrees of Frémont's proclamation and Lincoln's acts of emancipation is broad and essential. Frémont's act was one of civil administration, Lincoln's a step in an active military campaign; Frémont's was local and individual, Lincoln's national and general; Frémont's partly within military lines, Lincoln's altogether beyond military lines; Frémont's an act of punishment, Lincoln's a means of war; Frémont's acting upon property, Lincoln's acting upon persons. National law, civil and military, knew nothing of slavery, and did not protect it as an institution. It only tolerated State laws to that effect, and only dealt with fugitive slaves as "persons held to service." Lincoln did not, as dictator, decree the abrogation of these State laws; but in order to call persons from the military aid of the rebellion to the military aid of

the Union, he, as Commander-in-Chief, armed by military necessity, proclaimed that persons held as slaves within rebel lines should on a certain day become free unless rebellion ceased. CH XXIV

Thus no real distinction of principle exists between his criticism of Frémont's proclamation and the issuing of his own. On the other hand, there is a marked and acknowledged change of policy between the date of the Browning letter and the date of his preliminary Emancipation Proclamation. In September, 1861, he stood upon the position laid down in the Chicago platform; upon that expressed in the constitutional amendment and indorsed in his inaugural; upon that declared by Congress in July, in the Crittenden resolution, namely: that the General Government would not interfere directly or indirectly with the institution of slavery in the several States. This policy Lincoln undertook in good faith to carry out, and he adhered to it so long as it was consistent with the safety of the Government. His Browning letter is but a reaffirmation of that purpose. At the time he wrote it military necessity was clearly against military emancipation, either local or general. The revocation of Frémont's decree saved Kentucky to the Union, and placed forty thousand Kentucky soldiers in the Federal army. But one year after the date of the Browning letter, the situation was entirely reversed. The Richmond campaign had utterly failed; Washington was menaced; the country was despondent; and military necessity now justified the policy of general military emancipation. 1861

Whatever temporary popularity Frémont gained with antislavery people by his proclamation was

CH XXIV quickly neutralized by the occurrence of a new military disaster at Lexington. The battle of Wilson's Creek and the retreat of the Union army to Rolla left the Confederate forces master of south-west Missouri. The junction of rebel leaders, however, which had served to gain that advantage was of short duration. Their loosely organized and badly supplied army was not only too much crippled to follow the Union retreat, but in no condition to remain together. Price, as major-general of Missouri State forces, had only temporarily waived his rank, and consented to serve under McCulloch holding but a brigadier-general's commission from Jefferson Davis. The disagreement of the leaders and the necessities of the troops almost immediately compelled a separation of the rebel army. General Pearce with his Arkansas State forces returned home, and General McCulloch with his three Confederate regiments also marched back into Arkansas, taking up again his primary task of watching the Indian Territory. General Price held his numerous but heterogeneous Missouri followers together, and, busying himself for a time in gathering supplies, started back in a leisurely march northward from Springfield towards the Missouri River.

The strong secession feeling of southwestern Missouri rapidly increased his force, liberally furnished him supplies, and kept him fully informed of the numbers and location of the various Union detachments. There were none in his line of march till he neared the town of Lexington, on the Missouri River. Ex-Governor Jackson had recently convened the rebel members of his Legislature

here, but a small detachment of Union troops sent CH XXIV. from Jefferson City occupied the place, dispersing them and capturing their records, and the great seal of the State, brought by the Governor in his flight from the capital. About the 1st of September the Union commander at Jefferson City heard of the advance of Price, and sent forward the Chicago Irish Brigade under Colonel James A. Mulligan to reenforce Lexington, with directions to fortify and hold it. Mulligan reached Lexington by forced marches, where he was soon joined by the Union detachment from Warrensburg retreating before Price. The united Federal force now numbered 2800 men, with eight guns. Price pushed forward his cavalry, and made a slight attack on the 12th, but was easily repulsed and retired to await the arrival of his main body, swelled by continual accessions to some 20,000 men with thirteen guns; and on the 18th he again approached and formally laid siege to Lexington. 1861

Mulligan made good use of this interim, gathering provisions and forage, casting shot, making ammunition for his guns, and inclosing the college building and the hill on which it stood, an area of some fifteen acres, with a strong line of breastworks. Price began his attack on the 18th, but for two days made little headway. Slowly, however, he gained favorable positions; his sharp-shooters, skilled riflemen of the frontier, drove the Federals into their principal redan, cut off their water supply by gaining and occupying the river shore, and finally adopted the novel and effective expedient of using movable breastworks, by gradually rolling forward bales of wet hemp. On September

CH XXIV 20, after fifty-two hours of gallant defense, Mulligan's position became untenable. The reenforcements he had a right to expect did not come, his water cisterns were exhausted, the stench from dead animals burdened the air about his fort. Some one at length, without authority, displayed a white flag, and Price sent a note which asked, "Colonel, what has caused the cessation of the fight?" Mulligan's Irish wit was equal to the occasion, and he wrote on the back of the note, "General, I hardly know, unless you have surrendered." The pleasantries led to a formal parley, and Mulligan, with the advice of his officers, surrendered.

"Rebellion
Record,"
Vol III,
Docu-
ments, pp
70-83 and
439-442
Sept 20,
1861

The uncertainty which for several days hung over the fate of Lexington, and the dramatic incidents of the fight, excited the liveliest interest throughout the West. Newspaper discussion soon made it evident that this new Union loss might have been avoided by reasonable prudence and energy on the part of Frémont, as there were plenty of disposable troops at various points, which, during the slow approach and long-deferred attack of Price, could have been hurried to Mulligan's support. There were universal outcry and demand that at least the disaster should be retrieved by a prompt movement to intercept and capture Price on his retreat. Frémont himself seems to have felt the sting of the disgrace, for, reporting the surrender, he added: "I am taking the field myself, and hope to destroy the enemy, either before or after the junction of forces under McCulloch. Please notify the President immediately." "Your dispatch of this day is received," responded General Scott. "The President

Frémont to
Townsend,
Sept 23,
1861 W R.
Vol III,
p 184

is glad you are hastening to the scene of action; his words are, 'he expects you to repair the disaster at Lexington without loss of time.'"

CH XXIV
Gen Scott
to Frémont,
Sept 23,
1861 W R
Vol III,
p 185

This hope was not destined to reach a fulfillment. Price almost immediately retreated southward from Lexington with his captured booty, among which the great seal of the State figures as a conspicuous item in his report. On September 24 Frémont published his order, organizing his army of five divisions, under Brigadier-General John Pope at Boonville, Major J. McKinstry at Syracuse, Major-General David Hunter at Versailles, Brigadier-General Franz Sigel at Georgetown, Brigadier-General Alexander Asboth at Tipton. On paper it formed a respectable show of force, figuring as an aggregate of nearly 39,000; in reality it was at the moment well-nigh powerless, being scattered and totally unprepared for the field. Frémont's chronic inattention to details, and his entire lack of methodical administration, now fully revealed themselves. Even under the imperative orders of the general, nearly a month elapsed before the various divisions could be concentrated at Springfield; and they were generally in miserable plight as to transportation, supplies, and ammunition. Amidst a succession of sanguine newspaper reports setting forth the incidents and great expectations of Frémont's campaign, the convincing evidence could not be disguised that the whole movement would finally prove worthless and barren. Meanwhile, acting on his growing solicitude, President Lincoln directed special inquiry, and about the 13th of October the Secretary of War, accompanied by the Adjutant-General of the Army, reached Frémont's

1861.

W R
Vol III,
p 504.

1861.

CH XXIV camp at Tipton. His immediate report to the President confirmed his apprehension. Secretary Cameron wrote:

I returned to this place last night from the headquarters of General Frémont at Tipton. I found there and in the immediate neighborhood some 40,000 troops, with one brigade (General McKinstry's) in good condition for the field and well provided, others not exhibiting good care, and but poorly supplied with munitions, arms, and clothing. I had an interview with General Frémont, and in conversation with him showed him an order for his removal. He was very much mortified, pained, and, I thought, humiliated. He made an earnest appeal to me, saying that he had come to Missouri, at the request of the Government, to assume a very responsible command, and that when he reached this State he found himself without troops and without any preparation for an army, that he had exerted himself, as he believed, with great energy, and had now around him a fine army, with everything to make success certain; that he was in pursuit of the enemy, who he believed were within his reach, and that to recall him at this moment would not only destroy him, but render his whole expenditure useless. In reply to this appeal, I told him that I would withhold the order until my return to Washington, giving him the interim to prove the reality of his hopes as to reaching and capturing the enemy, giving him to understand that, should he fail, he must give place to some other officer. He assured me that, should he fail, he would resign at once.

It is proper that I should state that after this conversation I met General Hunter, who, in very distinct terms, told me that his division of the army, although then under orders to march, and a part of his command actually on the road, could not be put in proper condition for marching for a number of days. To a question I put to him, "whether he believed General Frémont fit for the command," he replied that he did not think that he was; and informed me that though second in command, he knew nothing whatever of the purposes or plans of his chief.

Cameron to
Lincoln,
Oct 14, 1861.
MS.

The opinion of another division commander, CH XXIV General Pope, was freely expressed in a letter which Hunter exhibited to the Secretary.

I received at one o'clock last night the extraordinary order of General Frémont for a forward movement of his whole force. The wonderful manner in which the actual facts and condition of things here are ignored stupefies me. One would suppose from this order that divisions and brigades are organized, and are under immediate command of their officers; that transportation is in possession of all; that every arrangement of supply trains to follow the army has been made; in fact, that we are in a perfect state of preparation for a move.

You know, as well as I do, that the exact reverse is the fact; that neither brigades nor divisions have been brought together, and that if they were there is not transportation enough to move this army one hundred yards; that, in truth, not one solitary preparation of any kind has been made to enable this advance movement to be executed. I have never seen my division, nor do I suppose you have seen yours. I have no cavalry even for a personal escort, and yet this order requires me to send forward companies of pioneers protected by cavalry. Is it intended that this order be obeyed, or rather, that we try to obey it, or is the order only designed for Washington and the papers? . . . I went to Jefferson City, the last time I saw you, for the express purpose of getting transportation for my division, and explained to General Frémont precisely what I have said above. How in the face of the fact that he knew no transportation was furnished, and that Kelton has none, he should coolly order such a movement, and expect it to be made, I cannot understand on any reasonable or common-sense hypothesis.

Pope to
Hunter,
Oct 12, 1861
Report of
the Com-
mittee on
the Con-
duct of the
War

Another letter to the President from a more cautious and conservative officer, Brigadier-General Samuel R. Curtis, exercising a local command in St. Louis, gave an equally discouraging view of the situation:

CH XXIV

Your Excellency's letter of the 7th inst, desiring me to express my views in regard to General Frémont frankly and confidentially to the Secretary of War, was presented by him yesterday, and I have complied with your Excellency's request. Matters have gone from bad to worse, and I am greatly obliged by your Excellency's letter, which breaks the restraint of military law, and enables me to relieve myself of a painful silence. In my judgment General Frémont lacks the intelligence, the experience, and the sagacity necessary to his command. I have reluctantly and gradually been forced to this conclusion. His reserve evinces vanity or embarrassment, which I never could so far overcome as to fully penetrate his capacity. He would talk of plans, which, being explained, only related to some move of a general or some dash at a shadow, and I am now convinced he has no general plan. Forces are scattered and generally isolated without being in supporting distance or relation to each other, and when I have expressed apprehension as to some, I have seen no particular exertion to repel or relieve, till it was too late. I know the demand made on him for force everywhere is oppressive; but remote posts have improperly stood out, and some still stand, inviting assault, without power to retreat, fortify, or reenforce. Our forces should be concentrated, with the rivers as a base of operation, and these rivers and railroads afford means for sudden and salutary assaults on the enemy. . . . The question you propound, "Ought General Frémont to be relieved from or retained in his present command?" seems easily answered. It is only a question of manner and time. Public opinion is an element of war which must not be neglected.

Curtis to
Lincoln,
Oct 12, 1861
MS

Thus the opinions of three trained and experienced army officers, who had every means of judging from actual personal observation, coincided with the general drift of evidence which had come to the President from civilian officials and citizens. Frémont had frittered away his opportunity for usefulness and fame; such an opportunity, indeed,



GENERAL SAMUEL R. CURTIS.

as rarely comes. He had taken his command three months before with the universal good-will of almost every individual, every subordinate, every official, every community in his immense department. In his brief incumbency he not only lost the general public confidence, but incurred the special displeasure or direct enmity of those most prominent in influence or command next to him, and without whose friendship and cooperation success was practically impossible. Waiting and hoping till the last moment, President Lincoln at length felt himself forced to intervene. On the 24th of October, just three months after Frémont had assumed command, he directed an order to be made that Frémont should be relieved and General Hunter be called temporarily to take his command. This order he dispatched by the hand of a personal friend to General Curtis at St. Louis, with the following letter:

DEAR SIR On receipt of this, with the accompanying inclosures, you will take safe, certain, and suitable measures to have the inclosure addressed to Major General Frémont delivered to him with all reasonable dispatch, subject to these conditions only, that if, when General Frémont shall be reached by the messenger,—yourself or any one sent by you,—he shall then have, in personal command, fought and won a battle, or shall then be actually in a battle, or shall then be in the immediate presence of the enemy in expectation of a battle, it is not to be delivered, but held for further orders. After, and not till after, the delivery to General Frémont, let the inclosure addressed to General Hunter be delivered to him.

Lincoln to
Curtis,
Oct 24, 1861
W R Vol
III, p 553

It will be seen that the conditions attending the delivery of this order were somewhat peculiar. If General Frémont had just won a battle, or were on

CH XXIV the eve of fighting one, then both justice to him, and more especially the risk or gain to the Union cause, rendered it inexpedient to make a sudden change in command. But the question also had another and possibly serious aspect. Amid all his loss of prestige and public confidence, Frémont had retained the clamorous adhesion and noisy demonstrative support of three distinct elements. First, a large number of officers to whom he had given irregular commissions, issued by himself, "subject to the approval of the President." These commissions for the moment gave their holders rank, pay, and power; and to some of them he had assigned extraordinary duties and trusts under special instructions, regardless of proper military usage and method. The second class was the large and respectable German population of St. Louis, and other portions of Missouri, forming the nucleus of the radical faction whose cause he had especially espoused. The third class comprised the men of strong antislavery convictions throughout the Union who hailed his act of military emancipation with unbounded approval.

The first class composed about his person a clique of active partisans, wielding power and dispensing patronage in his name; the other two supplied a convenient public echo. Out of such surroundings and conditions there began to come a cry of persecution and a vague hum of insubordination, coupled with adulations of the general. Some of his favorites talked imprudently of defiance and resistance to authority;¹ occasional acts of Frémont

¹ "To remove Mr. Frémont will investigation following it will be a great wrong, as the necessary prove It will make immense con-

himself gave a color of plausibility to these mutter- CH XXIV
ings. He had neglected to discontinue the expensive fortifications and barracks when directed to do so by the Secretary of War. Even since the President ordered him to modify his proclamation, he had on one occasion personally directed the original document to be printed and distributed. Several of his special appointees were stationed about the city of St. Louis, "so they should control every fort, arsenal, and communication, without regard to commanding officers or quartermasters." Suspicious naturally arose, and were publicly expressed, that he would not freely yield up his command; or, if he did not actually resist superior authority, that he might at least, upon some pretext, temporarily prolong his power.

Curtis to
Lincoln,
Nov 1, 1861.
MS.

There was, of course, no danger that he could successfully defy the orders of the President. The bulk of his army, officers and soldiers, would have spurned such a proposition. But the example of delay or doubt, any shadow of insubordination, would have had an extremely pernicious effect upon public opinion. General Curtis therefore sent a trusted bearer of dispatches, who, by an easy stratagem, entered Frémont's camp, gained a personal audience, and delivered the official order of removal. Duplicates of the President's letters were at the same time, and with equal care, dispatched to the camp of General Hunter, at a considerable dis-

fusion, and require all his control without the moral aid of the Government, is treason to the people. over his friends and the army to I cannot find smoother phrases, get them to do as he will,—accept for it is the death struggle of our it as an act of authority, not of nationality, and no time for fair justice,—but in time of war it words"—Mrs Frémont to Lamon, is treason to question authority St Louis, Oct 26, 1861 MS. To leave him here without money,

CH XXIV tance, and he traveled all night to assume his new duties. When he reached Frémont's camp, on the following day, he learned that ostensible preparations had been made and orders issued for a battle, on the assumption that the enemy was at Wilson's Creek advancing to an attack. Taking command, Hunter sent a reconnaissance to Wilson's Creek, and obtained reliable evidence that no enemy whatever was there or expected there. Frémont had been duped by his own scouts; for it is hardly possible to conceive that he deliberately arranged this final bit of theatrical effect.

The actual fact was that while Price, retreating southward, by "slow and easy marches," kept well beyond any successful pursuit, his army of twenty thousand which had captured Lexington dwindled away as rapidly as it had grown. His movement partook more of the nature of a frontier foray than an organized campaign: the squirrel-hunters of western Missouri, whose accurate sharp-shooting drove Mulligan into his intrenchments to starvation or surrender, returned to their farms or their forest haunts to await the occasion of some new and exciting expedition. The whole present effort of General Price, now at the head of only 10,000 or 12,000 men, was only to reach an easy junction with McCulloch on the Arkansas border, so that their united force might make a successful stand, or at least insure a safe retreat from the Union army.

Price to
Johnston,
Oct 16, 1861
W R Vol
III, p 720

President Lincoln, however, did not intend that the campaign to the southwest should be continued. Other plans were being matured. With the order to supersede Frémont he also sent the following

letters, explaining his well-considered views and CH XXIV conveying his express directions:

WASHINGTON, Oct. 24, 1861.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL S R CURTIS

MY DEAR SIR Herewith is a document—half letter, half order—which, wishing you to see, but not to make public, I send unsealed Please read it, and then inclose it to the officer who may be in command of the Department of the West at the time it reaches him. I cannot now know whether Frémont or Hunter will then be in command.

Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN

W R Vol
III, p 555

WASHINGTON, Oct 24, 1861.

TO THE COMMANDER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE WEST

SIR The command of the Department of the West having devolved upon you, I propose to offer you a few suggestions. Knowing how hazardous it is to bind down a distant commander in the field to specific lines and operations, as so much always depends on a knowledge of localities and passing events, it is intended, therefore, to leave a considerable margin for the exercise of your judgment and discretion

The main rebel army (Price's) west of the Mississippi is believed to have passed Dade County in full retreat upon northwestern Arkansas, leaving Missouri almost freed from the enemy, excepting in the southeast of the State Assuming this basis of fact, it seems desirable, as you are not likely to overtake Price, and are in danger of making too long a line from your own base of supplies and reinforcements, that you should give up the pursuit, halt your main army, divide it into two corps of observation, one occupying Sedalia and the other Rolla, the present termini of railroads; then recruit the condition of both corps by reestablishing and improving their discipline and instructions, perfecting their clothing and equipments, and providing less uncomfortable quarters. Of course both railroads must be guarded and kept open, judiciously employing just so much force as is necessary for this. From these two points, Sedalia and Rolla, and

CH XXIV especially in judicious cooperation with Lane on the Kansas border, it would be so easy to concentrate and repel any army of the enemy returning on Missouri from the southwest that it is not probable any such attempt to return will be made before or during the approaching cold weather. Before spring the people of Missouri will probably be in no favorable mood to renew for next year the troubles which have so much afflicted and impoverished them during this. If you adopt this line of policy, and if, as I anticipate, you will see no enemy in great force approaching, you will have a surplus of force, which you can withdraw from these points and direct to others, as may be needed, the railroads furnishing ready means of reenforcing those main points, if occasion requires. Doubtless local uprisings will for a time continue to occur, but these can be met by detachments and local forces of our own, and will ere long tire out of themselves. While, as stated in the beginning of the letter, a large discretion must be and is left with yourself, I feel sure that an indefinite pursuit of Price, or an attempt by this long and circuitous route to reach Memphis, will be exhaustive beyond endurance, and will end in the loss of the whole force engaged in it.

W R Vol
III, pp 553,
554.

Your obedient servant,

A LINCOLN.

The change of command occasioned neither trouble nor danger. Frémont himself acted with perfect propriety. He took leave of his army in a brief and temperate address, and returned to St. Louis, where he was welcomed by his admirers with a public meeting and eulogistic speeches. The demonstration was harmless and unimportant, though care had been taken to send authority to General Curtis to repress disorder, and specially to look to the safety of the city and the arsenal. In accordance with the policy outlined by the President, General Hunter soon drew back the Federal army from Springfield to Rolla, and the greater part

Townsend
to Curtis,
Nov 6, 1861
W R Vol
III, p 560.

of it was transferred to another field of operations. CH XXIV
 Hearing of this retrograde movement, McCulloch
 rapidly advanced, and for a season occupied
 Springfield. One of the distressing effects of these
 successive movements of contending forces is de-
 scribed in a sentence of his report, "The Union
 men have nearly all fled with the Federal troops,
 leaving this place almost deserted."

McCulloch
 to Cooper,
 Nov 19, 1861
 W. R. Vol
 III, p 743

CHAPTER XXV

THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC

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ON the day after the battle of Bull Run, General McClellan was ordered to Washington. He arrived there on the 26th of July, and the next day assumed command of the division of the Potomac, comprising the troops in and around Washington on both sides of the river. In his general report dated August 4, 1863, he says:

When I assumed command in Washington on the 27th of July, 1861, the number of troops in and around the city was about 50,000 infantry, less than 1000 cavalry, and 650 artillerymen, with nine imperfect field batteries of thirty pieces. There was nothing to prevent the enemy shelling the city from heights within easy range, which could be occupied by a hostile column almost without resistance. Many soldiers had deserted, and the streets of Washington were crowded with straggling officers and men, absent from their stations without authority, whose behavior indicated the general want of discipline and organization.

W R Vol
V, p 11

This picture is naturally drawn in the darkest colors, but the outlines are substantially accurate. There was great need of everything which goes to the efficiency of an army. There was need of soldiers, of organization, of drill, of a young and

vigorous commander to give impulse and direction to the course of affairs. CH XXV

All these wants were speedily supplied. The energy of the Government and the patriotism of the North poured into the capital a constant stream of recruits. These were taken in hand by an energetic and intelligent staff, assigned to brigades and divisions, equipped and drilled, with the greatest order and celerity. The infantry levies, on their first arrival, were sent to the various camps in the suburbs, and being there formed into provisional brigades were thoroughly exercised and instructed before being transferred to the forces on the other side of the river. These provisional brigades were successively commanded by Generals Fitz-John Porter, Ambrose E. Burnside, and Silas Casey. The cavalry and the artillery, as they arrived, reported respectively to Generals George Stoneman and William F. Barry, chiefs of those arms. Colonel Andrew Porter was made Provost-Marshal of Washington, and soon reduced the place to perfect order, which was not again disturbed during the war. Deserters were arrested, stragglers sent back to their regiments, and the streets rendered more quiet and secure than those of most cities in profound peace.

A great army was speedily formed. The fifty thousand that General McClellan found in Washington were reenforced by the stalwart men of the North as fast as steam could bring them by water and land. Nothing like it had ever before been seen on this continent. The grand total of officers and men of the regular army before the war consisted of seventeen thousand souls. On the 27th of October,

CH. XXV exactly three months after General McClellan assumed command, he reported an aggregate of strength for the army under him of 168,318, of which there were, he said, present for duty 147,695; and he reported several other bodies of troops *en route* to him. The Adjutant-General's report, three days later, shows present for duty with the Army of the Potomac, inclusive of troops in the lower Shenandoah, and at Washington, 162,737, with an aggregate present and absent of 198,238. This vast army was of the best material the country could afford. The three months' regiments—which were, as a rule, imperfectly organized and badly officered, their officers being, to a great extent, the product of politics and personal influence—had been succeeded by the volunteer army of three years' men, which contained all the best elements of the militia, with very desirable additions. Only the most able of the militia generals, those whom the President had recognized as worthy of permanent employment, returned to the field after the expiration of their three months' service. The militia organization of brigades and divisions had of course disappeared. The Governors of the States organized the regiments, and appointed regimental and company officers only. The higher organization rested with the President, who also had the appointing of general and staff officers. A most valuable element of the new army was the old regular organization, largely increased and improved by the addition of eleven regiments, constituting two divisions of two brigades each. This created a great many additional vacancies, which were filled partly from the old army and partly

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V, p 10

from civil life, giving to the service a large number of valuable officers. Two classes of cadets were that year graduated from the military academy at West Point, many of whom became useful and distinguished in the regular and the volunteer service. CH XXV

In brief, for three months the Government placed at the disposal of the young general more than a regiment a day of excellent troops. The best equipments, the best arms, the best artillery, the most distinguished of the old officers, the most promising of the young, were given him. The armies in every other part of the country were stinted to supply this most important of all the departments; and at first it was with universal popular assent that this bountiful provision was made for him. He had gained for the Union the only victory it had yet to its credit. He enjoyed a high character for military learning and science, founded upon the report of his friends. He was capable of great and long-continued industry in executive affairs. He was surrounded by an able and brilliant staff, all heartily devoted to him, and inclined to give him the greater share of the credit for their own work. His alert and gallant bearing, as he rode from camp to camp about Washington, surrounded by a company of aides in uniforms as yet untarnished by campaign life, impressed the imagination of tourists and newspaper correspondents, who at once gave him, on this insufficient evidence, the sobriquet of "the young Napoleon." In addition to these advantages, he was a man of extraordinary personal attractiveness; strangers instinctively liked him, and those who were thrown much in his company grew very

CH XXV fond of him. In every one, from the President of the United States to the humblest orderly who waited at his door, he inspired a remarkable affection and regard, a part of which sprang, it is true, from the intense desire prevalent at the time for success to our arms, which naturally included an impulse of good-will to our foremost military leaders; but this impulse, in the case of General McClellan, was given a peculiar warmth by his unusually winning personal characteristics. In consequence he was courted and caressed as few men in our history have been. His charm of manner, enhanced by his rising fame, made him the idol of the Washington drawing-rooms; and his high official position, his certainty of speedy promotion to supreme command, and the probability of great political influence to follow, made him the target of all the interests and ambitions that center in a capital in time of war.¹

He can hardly be blamed if this sudden and dazzling elevation produced some effect upon his character and temper. Suddenly, as by a spell of

¹ General W T Sherman writes in his "Memoirs" "General McClellan arrived . . . Instead of coming over the river, as we expected, he took a house in Washington, and only came over from time to time to have a review or inspection . . . August was passing and troops were pouring in from all quarters, General McClellan told me he intended to organize an army of 100,000 men, with 100 field batteries, and I still hoped he would come on our side of the Potomac, pitch his tent, and prepare for real hard work, but his head-

quarters still remained in a house in Washington City" Vol I, pp 191, 192

To show how differently another sort of general comprehended the duties before him at this time, we give another sentence from Sherman's "Memoirs" "I organized a system of drills, embracing the evolutions of the line, all of which was new to me, and I had to learn the tactics from books; but I was convinced that we had a long, hard war before us, and made up my mind to begin at the very beginning to prepare for it."

enchantment, he had been put in command of one of the greatest armies of modern times; he had become one of the most conspicuous figures of the world; his portrait had grown as familiar as those of our great historic worthies; every word and act of his were taken up and spread broadcast by the thousand tongues of publicity. He saw himself treated with the utmost deference, his prejudices flattered, and his favor courted by statesmen and soldiers twice his age. We repeat that he can hardly be blamed if his temper and character suffered in the ordeal. CH XXV

He has left in his memoirs and letters unquestionable evidence of a sudden and fatal degeneration of mind during the months he passed in Washington in the latter half of 1861.¹ At first everything was novel and delightful. On the 27th of July he wrote: "I find myself in a new and strange position here; President, Cabinet, General Scott, and all deferring to me. By some strange operation of magic I seem to have become the power of the land." Three days later he wrote: "They give me my way in everything, full swing and unbounded confidence. . . Who would have thought when we were married that I should so soon be called upon to save my country?" A few days afterwards: "I shall carry this thing on *en grand* and crush the rebels in one campaign." By the 9th of August his estimate of his own impor-

¹ George B. McClellan, "McClellan's Own Story," p. 82. We should hesitate to print these pathetic evidences of McClellan's weakness of character, contained as they are in private letters to

his family, if they had not been published by W. C. Prime, his editor, with a singular misconception of their true bearing, as a basis for attacking the Administration of Mr. Lincoln.

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"McClellan's Own
Story,"
p 85

tance had taken such a morbid development that he was able to say: "I would cheerfully take the dictatorship and agree to lay down my life when the country is saved"; yet he added in the same letter, "I am not spoiled by my unexpected new position." This pleasing delirium lasted only a few weeks, and was succeeded by a strange and permanent hallucination upon two points: one was that the enemy, whose numbers were about one-third his own, vastly exceeded his army in strength; and the other, that the Government—which was doing everything in its power to support him—was hostile to him and desired his destruction. On the 16th of August he wrote: "I am here in a terrible place; the enemy have from three to four times my force; the President, the old general, cannot or will not see the true state of affairs." He was in terror for fear he should be attacked, in doubt whether his army would stand. "If my men will only fight I think I can thrash him, notwithstanding the disparity of numbers. . . I am weary of all this." Later on the same day he wrote with exultation, "Providence is aiding me by heavy rains which are swelling the Potomac, which may be impassable for a week; if so we are saved." All through the month he expected battle "in a week." By the end of August his panic passed away; he said he was "ready for Beauregard," and a week later began to talk of attacking him.

Ibid., p 168

By this time he had become, to use his own language, "disgusted with this Administration—perfectly sick of it." His intimate friends and associates were among the political opponents of the men at the head of affairs, and their daily flatteries

had easily convinced him that in him was the only hope of saving the country, in spite of its incapable rulers. He says in one place, with singular *navet  *, that Mr. Stanton gained his confidence by professing friendship for him while loading the President with abuse and ridicule. He professed especial contempt for the President; partly because Mr. Lincoln showed him "too much deference." In October he wrote: "There are some of the greatest geese in the Cabinet I have ever seen—enough to tax the patience of Job." In November his disgust at the Government had become almost intolerable: "It is sickening in the extreme, and makes me feel heavy at heart, when I see the weakness and unfitness of the poor beings who control the destinies of this great country" The affair of Mason and Shdell, with which he had no concern, and upon which his advice was not asked, agitated him at this time. He felt that his wisdom alone must save the country in this crisis; he wrote that he must spend the day in trying to get the Government to do its duty. He did not quite know what its duty was—but must first "go to Stanton's to ascertain what the law of nations" had to say on the matter, Stanton being at this time his friend, and, as he thought, Lincoln's opponent. He had begun already to rank the President as among his enemies. He was in the habit of hiding at Stanton's when he had serious work to do, "to dodge," as he said, "all enemies in the shape of 'browsing' Presidents," etc. "I am thwarted and deceived by these incapables at every turn."

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"McClellan's Own Story,"
p 152

Ibid , p 91

Ibid , p 169

Ibid , p 177.

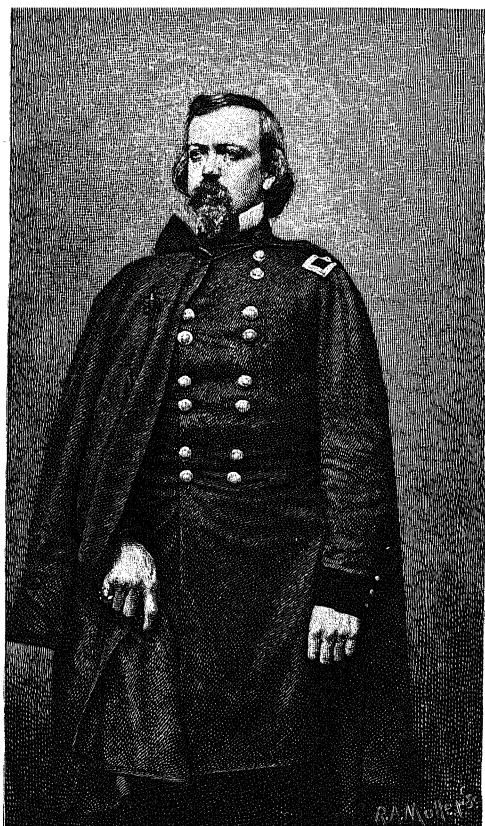
He soon began to call and to consider the Army of the Potomac as his own. He assumed the habit,

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McClellan
to Denni-
son, Aug
12, 1861
W. R.
Series III,
Vol I, p
407

McClellan
to Lincoln,
Aug 4, 1861
W. R. Vol
V, p. 7.

which he never relinquished, of asking that all desirable troops and stores be sent to him. Indeed, it may be observed that even before he came to Washington this tendency was discernible. While he remained in the West he was continually asking for men and money. But when he came to the Potomac he recognized no such need on the part of his successor, and telegraphed to Governor Dennison to pay no attention to Rosecrans's demand for reenforcements. In the plan of campaign which he laid before the President on the 4th of August, 1861, which was, in general objects and intentions, very much the same plan already adopted by General Scott and the Government, he assigned the scantiest detachments to the great work of conquering the Mississippi Valley; 20,000, he thought, would be enough, with what could be raised in Kentucky and Tennessee, "to secure the latter region and its railroads, as well as ultimately to occupy Nashville"—while he demanded for himself the enormous aggregate of 273,000 men. He wanted especially all the regular troops; the success of operations elsewhere, he said, was relatively unimportant compared with those in Virginia. These views of his were naturally adopted by his immediate associates, who carried them to an extreme probably not contemplated by the general. They seemed to regard him as a kind of tribune, armed by the people with powers independent of and superior to the civil authorities. On the 20th of August his father-in-law, Colonel R. B. Marcy, being in New York, and not being satisfied with what he saw in the way of recruitment, sent General McClellan a telegram urging him "to make a positive



GENERAL CHARLES P. STONE.

and unconditional demand for an immediate draft of the additional troops you require." "The people," he says, "will applaud such a course, rely upon it." The general, seeing nothing out of the way in this explosive communication of his staff-officer, sent it to the Secretary of War with this indorsement: "Colonel Marcy knows what he says, and is of the coolest judgment"; and recommended that his suggestion be carried into effect. All this time every avenue of transportation was filled with soldiers on their way to Washington.

In connection with his delusion as to the number of the enemy in front of him, it grew a fixed idea in his mind that all the best troops and all the officers of ability in the army should be placed under his orders. On the 8th of September he wrote a remarkable letter to the Secretary of War embodying these demands. He began, in the manner which at an early day became habitual with him and continued to the end of his military career, by enormously exaggerating the strength of the enemy opposed to him. He reports his own force in the immediate vicinity of Washington at 85,000, and that of the enemy at 130,000, which he says is a low estimate, and draws the inevitable conclusion that "this army should be reënforced at once by all the disposable troops that the East and West and North can furnish. . . I would also urgently recommend," he says, "that the whole of the regular army, old and new, be at once ordered to report here," with some trifling exceptions. He also demanded that the choicest officers be assigned to him, especially that none of those recommended by him should be sent anywhere else. Most of

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Raymond,
"Life of
Lincoln,"
1st Edit.,
p 488

McClellan
to Cam-
eron, Sept.
8, 1861
W R Vol
V, pp 588,
589

CH XXV these requests were granted, and General McClellan seems to have assumed a sort of proprietary right over every regiment that had once come under his command. When General Thomas W. Sherman's expedition was about sailing for Port Royal, he made an earnest request to the Government for the Seventy-ninth New York Highlanders. The matter being referred to General McClellan, he wrote in the most peremptory tone to the War Department, forbidding the detachment of those troops. "I will not consent," he says roundly, "to one other man being detached from this army for that expedition. I need far more than I now have, to save this country. . . It is the task of the Army of the Potomac to decide the question at issue." The President accepted this rebuke, and telegraphed to General Sherman that he had promised General McClellan "not to break his army here without his consent." But the regiment was afterwards sent to Sherman.

McClellan
to Thomas
A. Scott,
Oct 17, 1861
W R Vol
VI, p 179

Lincoln to
Sherman,
Oct 18, 1861
W R Vol
VI, p 181

Such an attitude towards the military and civil authorities has rarely been assumed by a general so young and so inexperienced, and to sustain it requires a degree of popular strength and confidence which is only gained by rapid and brilliant successes. In the case of General McClellan the faith of his friends and of the Government had no nourishment for a long time except his own promises, and several incidents during the late summer and autumn made heavy drafts upon the general confidence which was accorded him.

From the beginning of hostilities the blockade of the Potomac River below Washington was recognized on both sides as a great advantage to be

sought by the Confederates, and a great danger to be guarded against by the national Government. For a while the navy had been able to keep the waters of the river clear by the employment of a few powerful light-draft steamers; but it soon became evident that this would not permanently be a sufficient protection, and even before the battle of Bull Run the Navy Department suggested a combined occupation, by the army and the navy, of Mathias Point, a bold and commanding promontory on the Virginia side, where the Potomac, after a horseshoe bend to the east, flows southward again with its width greatly increased. On the 20th of August the Navy Department renewed its importunities to the War Department to cooperate in the seizure of this most important point, which was "absolutely essential to the unobstructed navigation of the Potomac." Eleven days later these suggestions were still more pressingly presented, without effect. In October, however, when rebel batteries were already appearing at different points on the river, and when it was in contemplation to send to Port Royal the steamers which had been policing the Potomac, an arrangement was entered into between the army and the navy to occupy Mathias Point. Orders were sent to Captain Thomas T. Craven to collect at that place the necessary boats for landing a force of 4000 men. He waited all night and no troops appeared. Captain Gustavus V. Fox, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, who had taken a great deal of interest in the expedition, went in deep chagrin to the President, who at once accompanied him to General McClellan's quarters to ask some explanation of this

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Welles to
Cameron,
Aug 20, 1861.
W. R. Vol.
V., p 573

CH XXV failure. The general informed him that he had become convinced it would not be practicable to land the troops, and that he had therefore not sent them. Captain Fox assured him that the navy would be responsible for that; and, after some discussion, it was concluded that the troops should go the next night. Captain Craven was again ordered to be in readiness; the troops did not go. Craven came to Washington in great agitation, threw up his command, and applied for sea-service, on the ground that his reputation as an officer would be ruined by the closing of the river while he was in command of the flotilla. The vessels went out one by one; the rebels put up their batteries at their leisure, and the blockade of the river was complete. When General McClellan was examined as to this occurrence by the Committee on the Conduct of the War, he did not remember the specific incidents as recited by Captain Fox, and as reported above, but said he never regarded the obstruction of the Potomac as of vital importance; its importance was more moral than physical.

Fox, Testimony, Report of the Committee on the Conduct of the War Vol I, p 240

McClellan, Testimony, Report of the Committee on the Conduct of the War Vol I, pp 421, 422

General McClellan was perhaps inclined to under-rate moral effects. The affair at Ball's Bluff, which occurred on the 21st of October, produced an impression on the public mind and affected his relations with the leading spirits in Congress to an extent entirely out of proportion to its intrinsic importance. He had hitherto enjoyed unbounded popularity. The country saw the army rapidly growing in numbers and improving in equipment and discipline, and was content to allow the authorities their own time for accomplishing their purposes. The general looked forward to no such

delays as afterwards seemed to him necessary. He even assumed that the differences between himself and General Scott arose from Scott's preference "for inaction and the defensive." On the 10th of October he said to the President: "I think we shall have our arrangements made for a strong reconnoissance about Monday to feel the strength of the enemy. I intend to be careful and do as well as possible. Don't let them hurry me, is all I ask." The President, pleased with the prospect of action, replied: "You shall have your own way in the matter, I assure you." On the 12th he sent a dispatch to Mr. Lincoln from the front, saying that the enemy was before him in force, and would probably attack in the morning. "If they attack," he added, "I shall beat them." Nothing came of this. On the 16th the President was, as usual, at headquarters for a moment's conversation with General McClellan, who informed him that the enemy was massing at Manassas, and said that he was "not such a fool as to buck against that place in the spot designated by the rebels." But he seemed continually to be waiting merely for some slight additional increment of his force, and never intending any long postponement of the offensive; while he was apparently always ready, and even desirous, for the enemy to leave their works and attack him, being confident of defeating them.

In this condition of affairs, with all his force well in hand, he ordered, on the 19th of October, that General George A. McCall should march from his camp at Langley to Dranesville, to cover a somewhat extensive series of reconnoissances for the purpose of learning the position of the enemy, and

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"McClellan's Own Story,"
p. 170.

J. H., Di-
ary

Ibid.

CH XXV of protecting the operations of the topographical engineers in making maps of that region. The next day he received a dispatch from General Banks's adjutant-general, indicating that the enemy had moved away from Leesburg. This information turned out to be erroneous; but upon receiving it General McClellan sent a telegram to General Charles P. Stone at Poolesville informing him that General McCall had occupied Dranesville the day before and was still there, that heavy reconnaissances would be sent out the same day in all directions from that point, and directing General Stone to keep a good lookout upon Leesburg, to see if that movement had the effect to drive them away. "Perhaps," he adds, "a slight demonstration on your part would have the effect to move them." General McClellan afterwards insisted that this order contemplated nothing more than that General Stone should make some display of an intention to cross, and should watch the enemy more closely than usual. But General Stone gave it a wider range, and at once reported to General McClellan that he had made a feint of crossing at Poolesville, and had at the same time started a reconnoitering party towards Leesburg from Harrison's Island, and that the enemy's pickets had retired to their intrenchments. Although General McClellan afterwards virtually held that this was in effect a disobedience of his orders, he did not direct General Stone to retire his troops — on the contrary, he congratulated him upon the movement; but thinking that McCall would not be needed to coöperate with Stone, he ordered the former to fall back from Dranesville to his camp near Prospect Hill, which order, though

Colburn to
Stone,
Oct 20, 1861
W R Vol
V, p 290

McClellan, Re-
port, W R
Vol V, p
33

contradicted by later instructions which did not reach him until his return to Langley, was executed during the morning of the 21st. But while McCall, having completed his reconnaissances, was marching at his leisure back to his camp, the little detachment which General Stone had sent across the river had stumbled upon a battle. CH XXV

A careful reading of the official accounts relating to this affair affords the best possible illustration of the lack of discipline and intelligent organization prevailing at that time in both armies. The reports of the different commanders seem hardly to refer to the same engagement; each side enormously exaggerates the strength of the enemy, and the descriptions of the carnage at critical moments of the fight read absurdly enough when compared with the meager official lists of killed and wounded. We will briefly state what really took place.

On the evening of October 20th General Willis A. Gorman made a demonstration of crossing at Edwards Ferry, and a scouting party of the Fifteenth Massachusetts crossed from Harrison's Island and went to within about a mile of Leesburg, returning with the report that they had found a small camp of the enemy in the woods. General Stone then ordered Colonel Charles Devens, commanding the Fifteenth Massachusetts, to take five companies of his regiment over in the night to destroy this camp at daybreak. Colonel Devens proceeding to execute this order found that the statement of the scouting party was erroneous, and reporting this fact waited in the woods for further orders. General Stone sent over the rest of the regiment, and later the Twentieth Massachusetts,

CH XXV Colonel William Raymond Lee, and Colonel Milton Cogswell's Tammany Regiment, the whole being under the command of Colonel E. D. Baker of the "California regiment" (Seventy-first Pennsylvania)—a Senator from Oregon, an officer of the highest personal and political distinction, and, as we have already related, not without experience in the Mexican war. General Stone had now evidently resolved upon a reconnaissance in force, and in case an engagement should result he confidently expected Colonel Baker to drive the enemy from his front, at which juncture General Stone expected to come in upon their right with Gorman's troops, which he was pushing over at Edwards Ferry, and capture or rout the entire command. He gave Colonel Baker discretionary authority to advance or to retire after crossing the river, as circumstances might seem to dictate.

Colonel Baker entered upon the work assigned to him with the greatest enthusiasm and intrepidity. The means of transportation were lamentably madequate; but working energetically, though without system, the greater part of the troops assigned for the service were at last got over the river, and Baker took command on the field about two o'clock. The battle was already lost, though the brave and high-spirited orator did not suspect it, any more than did General Stone, who, at Edwards Ferry, was waiting for the moment to arrive when he should attack the enemy's right and convert his defeat into rout. Colonel Devens, who had been skirmishing briskly with continually increasing numbers of the Confederates all the morning, had by this time fallen back in line with Baker's,

William R. Lee's, and Milton Cogswell's regiments, and a new disposition was made of all the troops on the ground to resist the advancing enemy. The disposition was as bad as could have been made; both flanks were exposed, and the reserves were placed in an unprotected position immediately in rear of the center, where they were shot down without resistance, and were only dangerous to their comrades in front of them. Colonel Baker, whose bravery marked him for destruction, was killed about four o'clock, being struck at the same moment by several bullets while striving to encourage his men, and after a brief and ineffectual effort by Colonel Cogswell to move to the left, the National troops retreated to the river bank. They were closely followed by the Confederates. the wretched boats into which many of them rushed were swamped; a few strong swimmers reached the Maryland shore, some were shot in the water, a large number threw their arms into the stream and, dispersing in the bushes, escaped in the twilight; but a great part of the entire command was captured. The losses on the Union side were 49 killed, 158 wounded, and 714 missing. The Confederate loss in killed and wounded was almost as great — 33 killed and 115 wounded and missing.

CH XXV

W R Vol
V, pp 308,
353

As soon as the news of the disaster reached General Stone, he hurried to the right, where the fugitives from the fight were arriving, did what he could to reestablish order there, and sent instructions to Gorman to intrench himself at Edwards Ferry and act on the defensive. General Banks came up with reinforcements at three o'clock in the morning of the 22d and assumed command.

CH XXV The Confederates made an attack upon Gorman the same day and were easily repulsed; but General McClellan, thinking "that the enemy were strengthening themselves at Leesburg, and that our means of crossing and recrossing were very insufficient," withdrew all the troops to the Maryland side. It seems from the Confederate reports that he was mistaken in concluding that the enemy were strengthening themselves; they were also getting out of harm's way as rapidly as possible. General Nathan G. Evans, their commander, says:

McClellan
to Secre-
tary of War,
Nov 1, 1861
W. R. Vol
V, p 290

Finding my brigade very much exhausted, I left Colonel Barksdale with his regiment, with two pieces of artillery and a cavalry force, as a grand guard, and I ordered the other three regiments to fall back towards Carter's Mill to rest and to be collected in order.

Evans to
Jordan,
Oct 31, 1861
W. R. Vol
V, p 350

The utter inadequacy of means for crossing was of course a sufficient reason to justify the cessation of active operations at that time and place.

Insignificant as was this engagement in itself, it was of very considerable importance in immediate effect and ultimate results. It was the occasion of enormous encouragement to the South. The reports of the Confederate officers exaggerated their own prowess and the numbers and losses of the National troops tenfold. General Beauregard, in his congratulatory order of October 23, claimed that the result of this action proved that no disparity of numbers could avail anything as against Southern valor assisted by the "manifest aid of the God of battles." But there, as at Bull Run, the number engaged and the aggregate killed and wounded were about equal on both sides—a fact clearly shown by the respective official records.

W. R. Vol.
V, p 348

At the North the gloom and affliction occasioned by the defeat were equally out of proportion to the event. Among the killed and wounded were several young men of brilliant promise and distinguished social connections in New England, and the useless sacrifice of their lives made a deep impression upon wide circles of friends and kindred. The death of Colonel Baker greatly affected the public mind. He had been little known in the East when he came as Senator from Oregon, but from the moment that he began to appear in public his fluent and impassioned oratory, his graceful and dignified bearing, a certain youthful energy and fire which contrasted pleasantly with his silver hair, had made him extremely popular with all classes. He was one of Mr. Lincoln's dearest friends; he was especially liked in the Senate; he was one of the most desirable and effective speakers at great mass-meetings. A cry of passionate anger went up from every part of the country over this precious blood wasted, this dishonor inflicted upon the National flag. CH XXV

The first and most available scapegoat was, naturally enough, General Stone. He cannot be acquitted of all responsibility even in the calmest review of the facts; there was a lack of preparation for the fight, a lack of thorough supervision after it had begun. But these were the least of the charges made against him. The suspicions which civil war always breeds, and the calumnies resulting from them, were let loose upon him. They grew to such proportions by constant repetition, during the autumn and winter following, that many people actually thought he was one of a band of

CH XXV conspirators in the Union army working in the interest of rebellion. This impression seized upon the minds of some of the most active and energetic men in Congress, friends and associates of Colonel Baker. They succeeded in convincing the Secretary of War that General Stone was dangerous to the public welfare, and on the 28th of January an order was issued from the War Department to General McClellan directing him to arrest General Stone. He kept it for several days without executing it; but at last, being apparently impressed by the evidence of a refugee from Leesburg that there was some foundation for the charges made by the committee of Congress, he ordered the arrest of General Stone, saying at the same time to the Secretary of War that the case was too indefinite to warrant the framing of charges. The arrest was made without consulting the President. When Mr. Stanton announced it to him the President said: "I suppose you have good reasons for it; and having good reasons, I am glad I knew nothing of it until it was done." General Stone was taken to Fort Lafayette, where he remained in confinement six months; he was then released and afterwards restored to duty, but never received any satisfaction in answer to his repeated demands for reparation or trial.

McClellan
to Stone,
Dec 5, 1862
W. R. Vol
V, p 345

For the moment, at least, there seemed no disposition to censure General McClellan for this misfortune. Indeed, it was only a few days after the battle of Ball's Bluff that he gained his final promotion to the chief command of the armies of the United States. A brief review of his relations to his predecessor, General Scott, may be necessary

to a proper understanding of the circumstances under which he succeeded to the supreme command. CH XXV

Their intercourse, at first marked by great friendship, had soon become clouded by misunderstandings. The veteran had always had a high regard for his junior, had sent him his hearty congratulations upon his appointment to command the Ohio volunteers, and although he had felt compelled on one occasion to rebuke him for interference with matters beyond his jurisdiction, their relations remained perfectly friendly, and the old general warmly welcomed the young one to Washington. But once there, General McClellan began to treat the General-in-Chief with a neglect which, though probably unintentional, was none the less galling. On the 8th of August, General McClellan sent to General Scott a letter¹ to the effect that he

Gen Scott
to McClel-
lan, May 21,
1861 W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
249 Cf
"McClel-
lan's Own
Story,"
p 47

¹ This letter deserves a careful reading. It is extremely characteristic, as showing, in the first place, how early McClellan began to exaggerate the number of the enemy in front of him, and how large were his ideas as to the force necessary for the protection of Washington so long as the duty of protecting the capital devolved upon him.

"HEADQUARTERS DIVISION
OF THE POTOMAC,

"WASHINGTON, Aug 8, 1861

"LIEUT -GEN WINFIELD SCOTT,
"Commanding U S Army

"GENERAL Information from various sources reaching me to-day, through spies, letters, and telegrams, confirms my impres-

sions, derived from previous advices, that the enemy intend attacking our positions on the other side of the river, as well as to cross the Potomac north of us. I have also received a telegram from a reliable agent just from Knoxville, Tenn, that large reinforcements are still passing through there to Richmond. I am induced to believe that the enemy has at least 100,000 men in front of us. Were I in Beauregard's place with that force at my disposal, I would attack the positions on the other side of the Potomac, and at the same time cross the river above this city in force. I feel confident that our present army in this vicinity is entirely insufficient for the emergency, and it is deficient in all the arms of the service—infan-

CH XXV believed the capital not only insecure, but "in imminent danger." As General McClellan had never personally communicated these views to his chief, but had, as Scott says, "propagated them in high quarters," so that they had come indirectly to the old general's ears, his temper, which was never one of the meekest, quite gave way, and declining to answer General McClellan's letter, he addressed an angry note to the Secretary of War, scouting the idea of Washington being in danger, calling attention to "the stream of new regiments that is pouring in upon us," complaining bitterly of the reticence and neglect with which his junior treated him, and begging the President, as soon as possible, to retire him from the active command of

try, artillery, and cavalry I the intrenchments which have therefore respectfully and most earnestly urge that the garrisons of all places in our rear be reduced at once to the minimum absolutely necessary to hold them, and that all the troops thus made available be forthwith forwarded to this city, that every company of regular artillery within reach be immediately ordered here to be mounted, that every possible means be used to expedite the forwarding of new regiments of volunteers to this capital without one hour's delay I urge that nothing be left undone to bring up our force for the defense of this city to 100,000 men, before attending to any other point I advise that at least eight or ten good Ohio and Indiana regiments may be telegraphed for from Western Virginia, their places to be filled at once by the new troops from the same States, who will be at least reliable to fight behind

been constructed there The vital importance of rendering Washington at once perfectly secure, and its imminent danger, impel me to urge these requests with the utmost earnestness, and that not an hour be lost in carrying them into execution A sense of duty which I cannot resist compels me to state that in my opinion military necessity demands that the departments of Northeastern Virginia, Washington, the Shenandoah, Pennsylvania, including Baltimore, and the one including Fort Monroe, should be merged into one department, under the immediate control of the commander of the main army of operations, and which should be known and designated as such

"Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"GEO. B. McCLELLAN,
"Major-General, Commanding."

McClellan
to Gen
Scott, Aug
8, 1861
W R Vol
XI, Part
III., pp.
8, 4.

the army, for which his age, his wounds, and his infirmities had unfitted him.

Mr. Lincoln was greatly distressed by this altercation between the two officers. He prevailed upon General McClellan to write him a conciliatory note, withdrawing the letter of the 8th; and armed with this, he endeavored to soothe the irritation of Scott, and to induce him to withdraw his angry rejoinder of the 9th. But youth, sure of itself and the future, forgives more easily than age; and Scott refused, respectfully but firmly, to comply with the President's request. He waited two days and wrote again to the Secretary of War, giving his reasons for this refusal. He believed General McClellan had deliberately, and with the advice of certain members of the Cabinet, offended him by the letter in question; and that for the last week, though many regiments had arrived, and several more or less important movements of troops had taken place, General McClellan had reported nothing to him, but had been frequently in conversation with various high officers of the Government. "That freedom of access and consultation," he continued, "have, very naturally, deluded the junior general into a feeling of indifference towards his senior." He argued that it would be "against the dignity of his years to be filing daily complaints against an ambitious junior," and closed by reiterating his own unfitness for command.

The two generals never became reconciled. The bickerings between them continued for two months, marked with a painful and growing bitterness on the part of Scott, and on the part of McClellan by a neglect akin to contempt. The elder officer, galled

Ch XXV

Gen Scott
to Cam-
eron, Aug
9, 1861.
W R Vol.
XI, Part
III, p 4.

Ibid,
Aug 12, 1861.
W R Vol.
XI, Part
III, pp 5, 6.

CH XXV by his subordinate's persistent disrespect, published a general order on the 16th of September, which he said was intended "to suppress an irregularity more conspicuous in Major-General McClellan than in any other officer," forbidding junior officers on duty from corresponding with their superiors except through intermediate commanders; the same rule applying to correspondence with the President and the Secretary of War, unless by the President's request. General McClellan showed how little he cared for such an order by writing two important letters to the Secretary of War within three days after it was issued. On the same day a special order was given General McClellan to report to army headquarters the number and position of troops under his command, to which order he paid no attention whatever. General Scott felt himself helpless in the face of this mute and persistent disobedience, but he was not able to bear it in silence. On the 4th of October he addressed another passionate remonstrance to the Secretary of War, setting forth these facts, asking whether there were no remedy for such offenses, advertng once more to his physical infirmities, and at last divulging the true reason why he had borne so long the contumely of his junior—that he was only awaiting the arrival of General Halleck, whose presence would give him increased confidence in the preservation of the Union, and thus permit him to retire. On the 31st of October he took his final resolution, and addressed the following letter to the Secretary of War:

Townsend,
Orders,
Sept 16,
1861 W R
Series III,
Vol I, p
482

Gen Scott
to Cam-
eron, Oct
4, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, pp
507-508.

For more than three years I have been unable, from a hurt, to mount a horse or to walk more than a few paces



GENERAL GEORGE B. McCLELLAN.

at a time, and that with much pain. Other and new infirmities—dropsy and vertigo—admonish me that repose of mind and body, with the appliances of surgery and medicine, are necessary to add a little more to a life already protracted much beyond the usual span of man. It is under such circumstances, made doubly painful by the unnatural and unjust rebellion now raging in the Southern States of our so late prosperous and happy Union, that I am compelled to request that my name be placed on the list of army officers retired from active service. As this request is founded on an absolute right granted by a recent act of Congress, I am entirely at liberty to say it is with deep regret that I withdraw myself, in these momentous times, from the orders of a President who has treated me with distinguished kindness and courtesy, whom I know among much personal intercourse to be patriotic, without sectional partialities or prejudices, to be highly conscientious in the performance of every duty, and of unrivaled activity and perseverance. And to you, Mr. Secretary, whom I now officially address for the last time, I beg to acknowledge my many obligations for the uniform high consideration I have received at your hands.

CH XXV

Gen Scott
to Cameron, Oct
31, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, pp
538, 539

His request was granted, with the usual compliments and ceremonies, the President and Cabinet waiting upon him in person at his residence. General McClellan succeeded him in command of the armies of the United States, and in his order of the 1st of November he praised in swelling periods the war-worn veteran whose latest days of service he had so annoyed and embittered. When we consider the relative positions of the two officers—the years, the infirmities, the well-earned glory of Scott, his former friendship and kindness towards his junior; and, on the other hand, the youth, the strength, the marvelous good fortune of McClellan, his great promotion, his certainty of

McClellan,
Order,
Nov 1, 1861
W R
Series III,
Vol I, pp.
540, 541

CH XXV almost immediate succession to supreme command—it cannot be said that his demeanor towards his chief was magnanimous. Although General Scott's unfitness for command had become obvious, although his disposition, which in his youth had been arrogant and haughty, had been modified but not improved by age into irascibility, it would certainly not have been out of place for his heir presumptive to dissemble an impatience which was not unnatural, and preserve some appearance at least of a respect he did not feel. Standing in the full sunshine, there was something due from him to an old and illustrious soldier stepping reluctantly into hopeless shadow.

The change was well received in all parts of the country. At Washington there was an immediate feeling of relief. The President called at General McClellan's headquarters on the night of the 1st of November and gave him warm congratulations. "I should feel perfectly satisfied," he said, "if I thought that this vast increase of responsibility would not embarrass you." "It is a great relief, sir," McClellan answered. "I feel as if several tons were taken from my shoulders to-day. I am now in contact with you and the Secretary. I am not embarrassed by intervention." "Very well," said the President; "draw on me for all the sense and information I have. In addition to your present command the supreme command of the army will entail an enormous labor upon you." "I can do it all," McClellan quickly answered. Ten days later Blenker's brigade organized a torchlight procession, in honor of the event. The President after the show was over went as usual to General McClellan's, and

J. H. Diary, Nov
1, 1861.

referring to the Port Royal expedition thought this "a good time to feel the enemy." "I have not been unmindful of that," McClellan answered; "we shall feel them to-morrow." Up to this time there was no importunity on the part of the President for an advance of the army, although for several weeks some of the leading men in Congress had been urging it. As early as the 26th of October, Senators Trumbull, Chandler, and Wade called upon the President and earnestly represented to him the importance of immediate action. Two days later they had another conference with the President and Mr. Seward, at the house of the latter. They spoke with some vehemence of the absolute necessity for energetic measures to drive the enemy from in front of Washington. The President and the Secretary of State both defended McClellan in his deliberate purpose not to move until he was ready. The zealous Senators did not confine their visits to the civil authorities. They called upon General McClellan also, and in the course of an animated conversation Mr. Wade said an unsuccessful battle was preferable to delay; a defeat would be easily repaired by the swarming recruits—a thrust which McClellan neatly parried by saying he would rather have a few recruits before a victory than a good many after a defeat. There was as yet no apparent hostility to McClellan, even among "these wretched politicians," as he calls them. On the contrary, this conference of the 26th was not inharmonious; McClellan represented General Scott as the obstacle to immediate action, and skillfully diverted the zeal of the Senators against the General-in-Chief. He wrote that night:

CH XXV

J H, Dr-
ary, Nov
11, 1861.Ibid, Oct
26, 27, 1861

CH XXV For the last three hours I have been at Montgomery Blair's talking with Senators Wade, Trumbull, and Chandler about war matters. They will make a desperate effort to-morrow to have General Scott retired at once, until that is accomplished I can effect but little good. He is ever in my way, and I am sure does not desire effective action.

"McClellan's Own Story,"
p 171

The President, while defending the general from the strictures of the Senators, did not conceal from McClellan the fact of their urgency. He told him it was a reality not to be left out of the account; at the same time he was not to fight till he was ready. "I have everything at stake," the general replied. "If I fail, I will never see you again." At this period there was no question of more than a few days' delay.

J H. Daily

The friendly visits of the President to army headquarters were continued almost every night until the 13th of November, when an incident occurred which virtually put an end to them. On that evening Mr. Lincoln walked across the street as usual, accompanied by one of his household, to the residence of the Secretary of State, and after a short visit there both of them went to General McClellan's house, on H street. They were there told that the general had gone to the wedding of an officer and would soon return. They waited nearly an hour in the drawing-room, when McClellan returned, and, without paying any special attention to the orderly who told him the President was waiting to see him, went upstairs. The President, thinking his name had not been announced, again sent a servant to his room and received the answer that he had gone to bed. Mr. Lincoln attached no special importance to this incident, and,

so far as we know, never asked for an explanation nor received one.¹ But it was not unnatural for him to infer that his frequent visits had become irksome to the general. There was no cessation of their friendly relations, though after this most of their conferences were held at the Executive Mansion.

CH XXV

J H, D1
ary

On the 20th of November a grand review of the Army of the Potomac took place at Munson's Hill. There were about 50,000 men in line, drawn up on a wide, undulating plain, which displayed them to the best advantage, and a finer army had rarely been seen. The President, accompanied by Generals McClellan and McDowell, and followed by a brilliant cavalcade of a hundred general and staff officers, rode up and down the entire extent of the embattled host. Mr. Lincoln was a good horseman, and was received with hearty cheers by the troops, thousands of whom saw him that day for the first and last time. The reviewing officers then took their stand upon a gentle acclivity in the center of the plain, and the troops filed past in review through the autumnal afternoon until twilight. It had certainly all the appearance of a great army ready for battle, and there was little doubt that they would speedily be led into action. But after the review drilling was resumed; recruits continued to pour in, to be assigned and equipped and instructed. The general continued his organizing

¹ The President was slow to perceive a personal lack of attention on one occasion he had made an engagement for a conference at his office between General O M Mitchel, Governor Dennison and McClellan, to which the latter did not come. After long waiting, at which the other gentlemen may have shown some irritation, the President said, "Never mind, I will hold McClellan's horse if he will only bring us success" [MS letter from F A. Mitchel]

CH XXV work; many hours of every day he passed in the saddle, riding from camp to camp with tireless industry, until at last he fell seriously ill, and for several weeks the army rested almost with folded hands awaiting his recovery.

END OF VOL. IV.